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# ORIGINAL PLAYS

*FOURTH SERIES*







*Ellis & Walery, photo.*

*George H. Walery*





# ORIGINAL PLAYS

BY

W. S. GILBERT

## *FOURTH SERIES*

CONTAINING

THE FAIRY'S DILEMMA, THE GRAND DUKE,  
HIS EXCELLENCY, "HASTE TO THE WEDDING," FALLEN  
FAIRIES, THE GENTLEMAN IN BLACK, BRANTINGHAME  
HALL, CREATURES OF IMPULSE, RANDALL'S THUMB,  
THE FORTUNE-HUNTER, THESPIS



WITH A PORTRAIT

LONDON  
CHATTO & WINDUS

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# THE FAIRY'S DILEMMA.

*AN ORIGINAL DOMESTIC PANTOMIME,*  
IN TWO ACTS.

*Produced at the Garrick Theatre, London, under the management of  
Mr. Arthur Bourchier.*

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

### SUPERNATURALS.

THE DEMON ALCOHOL      ...      ...      MR. JERROLD ROBERTSHAW.  
THE FAIRY ROSEBUD ...      ...      ...      MISS JESSIE BATEMAN.

*Imps, Goblins, Fairies, etc.*

### UNNATURALS.

COL. SIR TREVOR MAULEVERER,  
BART., of the Household Cavalry ... MR. ARTHUR BOURCHIER.  
(Afterwards Clown.)

THE REV. ALOYSIUS PARFITT, M.A.,  
of S. Parabola's      ...      ...      MR. O. B. CLARENCE.  
(Afterwards Harlequin.)

MR. JUSTICE WHORTLE, of the High  
Court of Judicature      ...      ...      MR. SYDNEY VALENTINE.  
(Afterwards Pantaloon.)

THE LADY ANGELA WEALDSTONE,  
Daughter of the Marquis of Harrow ... MISS VIOLET VANBRUGH.  
(Afterwards Columbine.)

CLARISSA, Daughter of Mr. Justice  
Whortle ...      ...      ...      MISS DOROTHY GRIMSTON.

MRS. CRUMBLE, Housekeeper to Mr.  
Parfitt ...      ...      ...      MISS EWELL.

### ACT I.

SCENE 1. THE ABODE OF THE DEMON ALCOHOL.

SCENE 2. THE VICARAGE.

### ACT II.

SCENE 1. MR. JUSTICE WHORTLE'S CROQUET LAWN.

SCENE 2. CLOUDLAND.

SCENE 3. GRAND TRANSFORMATION SCENE:

**The Revolving Realms of Radiant Rehabilitation!**

SCENE 4. PASTRYCOOK'S AND CHEESEMONGER'S  
SHOPS.

SCENE 5. THE VICARAGE.

# THE FAIRY'S DILEMMA.

## ACT I,

### SCENE 1.—THE ABODE OF THE DEMON ALCOHOL.

*Imps discovered round cauldron, labelled "Rhymes." They bustle about, fetching words that rhyme with each other, and putting them into the cauldron, over which an imp presides. An imp goes off and fetches a label, "Bones"; another goes off and fetches another label, "Jones." They both put labels into cauldron, which the presiding imp stirs up. A third imp fetches a label, "Town"; a fourth fetches a label, "Brown." Both labels are thrown into cauldron. First imp fetches label, "Myth"; second imp fetches label, "Smith." Both labels thrown into cauldron. Presiding imp stirs them all up together. Flames issue from cauldron as each pair of labels is thrown in. Gong. The DEMON ALCOHOL appears through scene.*

Al. It is a Demon's fate that every time  
He speaks he must express himself in rhyme,  
And though to do my utmost I endeavour,  
For rhyme and metre I've no ear whatever.  
So, business being slack, I've ordered you,  
My faithful imps (a most painstaking crew),  
With careful judgment and discretion wary,  
To cook me up a Rhyming Dictionary,  
Which I can study in my hours of leisure.  
Is the job finished?

*[Imps imply assent. A large volume labelled "Rhyming Dictionary" rises out of cauldron amid flames. ALCOHOL takes it and opens it.]*

Here's indeed a treasure!  
(to imps) Be off! I thank you all! (They go off.) Now that  
they've gone  
I'll have an hour's study all alone. (Cauldron sinks  
through trap.)

*[ALCOHOL sits on rock and opens book.]*

## THE FAIRY'S DILEMMA.

Of jingling rhymes here is a storehouse, quite—  
 (reads) "White, bright, light, tight, fight, might, sight, bite,  
 hight, kite";  
 "Clue, Jew, true, blue, rue, new, too, few, do, coo!"

[Gong—FAIRY ROSEBUD appears.]

(annoyed) Come in!

Rose. Good morning!

Al. Who the deuce are you?

Rose. A fairy—and my name is Rosebud.

Al. Is it!  
 Greatly indebted to you for this visit.  
 What do you want?

Rose. With worry I'm quite dizzy:  
 (imploringly) I want your help!

Al. (reverting to book). Some other time: I'm busy.

Rose. That's very rude, and rudeness I detest.  
 (pitifully) I'm in an awful fix!

Al. Are you? Poor old girl! All right, I'll do my best.

Rose (almost crying). Of all good fairies I'm the most unlucky!  
 For everything goes wrong!

Al. Now look here, ducky,  
 I twig your methods. Every blessed time  
 You make a point of leaving it to me to find the rhyme;  
 That's an old dodge of yours—your favourite ticket—  
 It's all very well, young woman, but it isn't cricket.

Rose (speaking prose). Come, I don't want to be hard on you. We're quite alone, and nobody will know. Your verse is abominably faulty; suppose we drop into prose?

Al. Well, that's very nice of you. It'll save a lot of trouble. These confounded rhymes simply drive me crazy.

Rose. Yes—they're not your strong point. I've heard you rhyme "side-board" with "school-board"!

Al. Well, what's the matter with that?

Rose. And "well-wisher" with "extinguisher"! You know you're a perfect goose!

Al. Well, never mind that now. Sit down, Rosy, and let's be cosy. Come, *that's* not so bad!

Rose. Cosy, indeed! You surely don't expect me to be cosy with a person of *your* stamp! You seem to forget that I'm a *good* fairy. Good fairies have to be very particular.

Al. How dull.

Rose. It *is* dull. Now, I've an aunt who is a bad fairy—dark, black hair, heavy eyebrows, dresses in black and red satin—

Al. I know her.

*Rose.* Well, you've no idea what a good time *she* has—although *she's* not received. However, to business.

*Al. (seductively).* Now, come and sit here—do!

*Rose.* You've such a way with you, I never did! Well, just for once, although it's really very wrong. (*She sits by him; he puts his arm round her waist.*) Now, do behave! (*Removes his arm.*) I'm not my aunt, you know! Now, it's my duty as a Good Fairy to watch over respectable young couples and bring their courtship to a happy termination, and it's your duty as a Demon to thwart this intention by every means in your power. Now, there's been very little doing in my line of late—and I've received a pretty strong hint from the Fairy Queen that if I don't find a worthy young couple to protect, whose courtship is threatened with destruction by a Malevolent Demon, my office will be abolished, and I shall be relegated to dance in the back rows with the stout ones. And *that's* a pretty look-out, isn't it?

*Al.* It isn't cheery. But where do I come in?

*Rose.* I'll tell you. After a deal of trouble I've found the very people I want—a mild young clergyman of blameless life, and a very respectable hospital nurse, who are over head and ears in love with each other. Now, the hospital nurse——

*Al.* Pretty?

*Rose.* Fine girl—is pursued by Colonel Sir Trevor Mauleverer, a wicked Baronet in the Life Guards, whose intentions towards her are too dreadful to talk about. Will you believe it, this bold, bad man actually intends to carry her off to his flat in——

*Al.* I know—Shaftesbury Avenue.

*Rose.* Not this time—Whitehall Mansions.

*Al.* Oh, naughty, naughty! But are you sure of your facts?

*Rose.* No doubt at all about them. Why, I've seen him making love to her!

*Al.* Sure he doesn't want to marry her?

*Rose.* Want to marry her! Don't I tell you he's a Baronet!

*Al.* I see—a *bad* Baronet!

*Rose.* Why, aren't all Baronets bad? One would think you'd never read a shilling shocker in your life! Now, I want you to introduce yourself to Sir Trevor Mauleverer and explain that you're *him*, Familiar Spirit—that you know he entertains the worst designs against this young woman, and that you are willing to help him in every way. He'll jump at your offer. You'll carry her off to Whitehall Mansions, and I'll interfere just in time—before any mischief happens, you know—and restore her to the arms of her faithful clergyman.



*Al.* (who has been listening in amazement). Well, I'm da—  
(recollects himself)—I beg pardon!

*Rose.* Oh, don't mind me, George.

*Al.* I really couldn't help it. It relieves one's feelings. Besides, it's so expressive.

*Rose.* And so true.

*Al.* Eh? Ah—yes—yes—exactly. But look here, for a Good Fairy you're an uncommonly cool hand.

*Rose.* Good Fairies are naturally cooler than Demons.

*Al.* But, I say, aren't you playing it rather low down for a Good Fairy?

*Rose.* What do you mean?

*Al.* Respectable young girl, you know—clerical lover—bad Baronet—flat in Whitehall Mansions, eh?

*Rose.* Well, you *are* squeamish! Don't I tell you that I mean to rescue her and restore her to her young man before any harm can possibly happen?

*Al.* Yes, you did say that. But, Rosy—come a little nearer.

*Rose.* No, it's not right. Besides, your scales scratch.

*Al.* (wheedlingly). What am I to get for this, eh?

*Rose.* Get for it? Oh, you don't want to get anything for it. A good action is its own reward. (*Aside.*) He's rather a dear! I wish he wasn't so spotty!

*Al.* Now, if I get you out of this scrape—(I'm thinking of settling, you know)—if I get you out of this scrape, and we make it *all* trumps, eh? What do you say, Rosy?

*Rose.* Oh, I couldn't think of it! That is a matter that I must absolutely decline to discuss—at present. Now, I must be off. I've got to change a respectable young plumber and a good plain cook into Harlequin and Columbine—and the electric light is a consideration. [*Backing towards opening.*]

*Al.* But look here, don't be in a hurry. Suppose it turns out all right, eh?

*Rose.* Well, *if* you carry off the young woman—and *if* I interfere just in time—and *if* I succeed in reuniting the young people—and *if* the Fairy Queen is pleased—and *if* I'm not relegated to the back rows among the stout ones—and *if* it all turns out trumps—

*Al.* (eagerly). Well?

*Rose.* Well, I'll see!

[*She steps back into opening, which closes. Stage darkens.*]

END OF SCENE I.

## SCENE II.—INTERIOR OF THE VICARAGE OF S. PARADOLA.

*The REV. ALOYSIUS PARFITT discovered playing "The Lost Chord" on harmonium. Camera with stand, etc., MRS. CRUMBLE, his housekeeper, also discovered.*

*Aloy. Mrs. Crumble——*

*Mrs. C. Yes, sir.*

*Aloy. I am expecting a few friends to luncheon. Sir Trevor Mauleverer, Miss Clarissa Whortle——*

*Mrs. C. The young lady which he's going to marry, sir?*

*Aloy. Never mind that—and Nurse Jane Collins, who is in attendance on Lady Whortle.*

*Mrs. C. Yes, sir—the young lady which you're going to marry, sir.*

*Aloy. Sir Trevor and I are certainly engaged to these young ladies, but that is not now the question. We will confine ourselves, if you please, to the question, which is—what do you propose to give us for luncheon?*

*Mrs. C. There's yesterday's chicken, sir, which will make a beautiful "devil."*

*Aloy. Er—no, I think not. I should prefer yesterday's chicken cooked in any other way. A *salmi*, for instance.*

*Mrs. C. And there's a nice little leg of lamb that came from Wales yesterday. That, with apple dumplings and an open jam tart and custards——*

*Aloy. Will do extremely well. At half-past one, Mrs. Crumble.*

*Mrs. C. It shall be ready, sir. Oh, sir, I do hope Miss Clarissa will be happy with Sir Trevor!*

*Aloy. Why should you concern yourself about that, Mrs. Crumble?*

*Mrs. C. Why, sir, these military baronights! Well, I can't say as I holds with military baronights.*

*Aloy. (reproachfully). How unjust you are! What harm have military baronets ever done to you, Mrs. Crumble?*

*Mrs. C. Lor, sir, no harm whatever! The idea! Only in all the stories as I ever read, whenever I come across a military baronight I know as he's going to turn out unsatisfactory.*

*Aloy. You need have no apprehension in this instance. Sir Trevor Mauleverer is one of my oldest friends—a thorough English gentleman of the best type.*

*Mrs. C.* I'm very glad to hear it, sir, for Miss Clarissa——

*Aloy.* Now never mind Miss Clarissa. You can go, Mrs. Crumble.

*Mrs. C.* Yes, sir.

[*Exit Mrs. CRUMBLE.*]

*Aloy.* Mrs. Crumble's questions are inconvenient, and her deductions incorrect, but I am happy to say that I have contrived to answer her without any violation of the truth. Sir Trevor is engaged, but not to Clarissa Whortle. I am also engaged, but not to Nurse Collins. So far, all is satisfactory, but what did Mrs. Crumble mean by her remark about military baronets? Mere ignorant prejudice, of course. Trevor would never—no, no, of course not. It's merely manner on his part—nothing but manner. Still, I do sometimes wish that he——  
(*Noise without.*) Who is that? Not the new curate, I hope.

*Enter Sir TREVOR in undress uniform.*

*Sir T.* Aloysius, my dear fellow——

*Aloy.* Trevor, my old friend! [They shake hands.]

*Sir T.* This is a critical moment, Aloysius! In an hour's time we shall have achieved the good deed to which we solemnly pledged ourselves a year ago! In one hour we shall be married men!

*Aloy.* Yes—still, I cannot help wishing that the humane and unselfish work to which we have so earnestly dedicated ourselves could have been achieved without resort to a deception which, harmless though it be, is a deception nevertheless.

*Sir T.* I think you are, perhaps, over-sensitive on this point. Recollect that, maddened with righteous indignation at the oppression to which weak, helpless, and submissive women are but too often subjected at the hands of arbitrary, dictatorial, and mercenary parents, we solemnly vowed that we would devote ourselves, heart and soul, to the emancipation of the very first instances of such oppression that came to our knowledge—even though it were necessary to take the extreme course of marrying them in order to release them from such inhuman thralldom.

*Aloy.* No doubt, no doubt. Clarissa's father, Mr. Justice Whortle, an extremely irritable, arbitrary, and dictatorial old person, insisted upon her marrying one of three men of wealth and title.

*Sir T.* I had the honour of being one of the three.

*Aloy.* You had the honour of being one of the three. Seeing no other way to avert the doom with which the helpless girl

was threatened, I promised her that as soon as she came of age I would go so far as to make her my wife. She came of age yesterday, and we are to be married before the Registrar to-day.

*Sir T.* Prompt.

*Aloy.* Yes, short reckonings make long husbands. Nurse Collins is, I have no doubt, equally the victim of some description of oppression, and you, I am convinced, have equally sacrificed yourself at the altar of altruistic self-abnegation.

*Sir T.* (after a pause). Aloysius, I am about to confide to you a secret which, hitherto, I have confided to no one. The lady whom you know as Jane Collins, the hospital nurse, is no other than the Lady Angela Wealdstone, only child of the haughty and despotic Marquis of Harrow!

*Aloy.* The lady who ran away from home a year ago? Bless my heart, you don't say so!

*Sir T.* The Marquis had insisted on her marrying the wealthy but disreputable Duke of Danderly, whom she regarded with absolute detestation. At that time Lady Angela was a year under age and a Ward in Chancery. So, at my suggestion, she left her home, and, changing her name to Jane Collins, she entered herself as probationer at Bushey Heath Cottage Hospital. She is now a fully qualified nurse, and as such I procured her an engagement to attend on Lady Whortle, who, as you know, is a chronic invalid. Lady Angela also came of age yesterday, and we are also to be married before the Registrar to-day.

*Aloy.* Yes. There are, however, two points upon which I confess my conscience is uneasy. Although I embarked upon my engagement to Clarissa from a simple sense of duty, I cannot conceal from myself that, despite a certain tendency to frivolity, which it will be my constant study to correct, I have grown to be strongly attached to Clarissa.

*Sir T.* And, between ourselves, I am devotedly fond of Angela.

*Aloy.* Indeed! I had no idea of this.

*Sir T.* I am devotedly fond of Angela, but as her affection for me is based entirely on the belief that I am sacrificing my life's happiness to her interests, it won't do to let her know, just yet, how particularly happy I am to be permitted to do so. Now, what is the second point that exercises you?

*Aloy.* Why, the deception to which I have been a passive party—my having allowed everyone to suppose that I was engaged to Lady Angela, whereas I was really engaged to

Clarissa! It is true that I never said as much to any one, but—I never contradicted it.

*Sir T.* My dear boy, the arrangement was made with the full consent and connivance of both ladies, and no one has any right to complain. After all, what does it amount to? You are supposed to be engaged to Lady Angela, whereas you are really engaged to Miss Clarissa. I am supposed to be engaged to Miss Clarissa, whereas I am really engaged to Lady Angela—and both ladies enter, heart and soul, into the arrangement!

¶

[Enter CLARISSA WHORTLE, and LADY ANGELA WEALDSTONE.

LADY ANGELA is dressed in the costume of a professional hospital nurse, with long cloak, cottage bonnet, grey dress, white bib and apron, etc. CLARISSA wears a handsome mantle and elaborate picture hat.

*Clar. (politely).* Good morning, Sir Trevor. Aloysius, my dearly loved one! (*Embraces ALOYSIUS.*)

*Lady An. (politely).* How do you do, Mr. Parfitt? Trevor, dearest Trevor, are we late? (*Embracing SIR TREVOR.*)

*Sir T.* My dear Angela, you could never be too soon, and you never are too late.

*Lady An. (alarmed).* Hush, Trevor—you forget!

*Sir T.* No. I have confided our secret to Mr. Parfitt.

*Lady An.* Have you? And I have told Clarissa!

*Clar.* Yes; Jane—I mean Lady Angela—has told me everything.

*Lady An.* You are not angry with me, Mr. Parfitt, for this innocent little deception?

*Aloy.* I have, alas! forfeited all right, Lady Angela, to be hypercritical where an innocent deception is concerned.

*Lady An.* Oh, don't take a professional view of so small a matter, Mr. Parfitt! If I had passed under my own name, I should have been discovered at once, and restored by my trustees to my inhuman father's custody.

*Aloy. (calmly).* And is Clarissa happy?

*Clar.* Happy! I should think so! Are we not to be married to-day? Am I not to be made his whose noble altruism has rescued me from a doom worse than death itself? (*Recollecting herself.*) Oh, I beg your pardon, Sir Trevor!

*Sir T.* Pray don't! I quite understand.

*Clar.* What I mean is that marriage, under compulsion, with any gentleman, however eligible, must be distasteful to a girl who

*Sir T.* But I was not eligible. I was already engaged to Lady Angela.

*Clar.* Now, if you had been free——

*Aloy.* Clarissa, let us not pursue this painful theme into the embarrassing fields of illusive hypothesis. It is enough that your father insisted upon your marriage with a gentleman who, for whatever reason, was not to your taste, and that I interfered to prevent it.

*Lady An.* It's like a tale of old chivalry! Two poor helpless maidens, in dire straits, rescued by two gallant knight-errants, who had pledged themselves to sacrifice their life's happiness in their service! Ah, Trevor, I would that I were worthy of you!

*Sir T.* Take heart, Angela, it may be that you are.

*Lady An.* Dearest!

*Clar.* In one short hour we shall be each other's. But before that can be, my father, who is going to open the Commission, will stop here on his way that you may photograph him in his robes.

*Aloy.* It was so arranged yesterday. Everything is prepared. There is one point to which I should like to draw your attention. In the presence of the Judge it is unhappily necessary that I should address myself in terms of endearment to Lady Angela, and that Trevor should direct his attentions to yourself. May I suggest that we do not over-act our parts?

*Lady An.* I'm sure, Mr. Parfitt, you are always most particular upon that point. Such perfunctory endearments as are necessary to the situation have been performed by you with a delicacy—a self-restraint which——

*Aloy.* A—yes. I—I was not referring to myself, Lady Angela. But, to be frank, I have noticed a tendency—unintentional, I need hardly say—on the part of our good friend Trevor in his attentions to Clarissa to unnecessarily accentuate the situation. That he does so and that she reciprocates it in the warmth of their enthusiasm in a good cause, I am convinced; but still—they do it.

*Sir T.* My dear fellow, if I am to be natural, I must not be hampered. It has ever been the maxim of the Mauleverers to do what they had to do with all the energy at their command. It's in the blood.

*Aloy.* I see. I didn't know it was in the blood—that makes a difference, of course. At the same time——

*Clar.* Aloysius, I think you are unjust. You cannot but be aware that we have to create a certain impression, and that we

must be realistic if we are to be convincing. I love you, dearest Aloysius, with a fervour—with a devotion——

*Enter MR. JUSTICE WHORTLE in full robes and full-bottomed wig, ushered by MRS. CRUMBLE.*

[CLARISSA, turning to SIR TREVOR with simulated affection, continues—

—with a devotion, with an enthusiasm which I can scarcely expect you, dearest Trevor, to rival in the overflowing fulness of its intensity. It is not in man's nature to do so, and I do not complain. (LADY ANGELA has crossed affectionately to ALOYSIUS, who, formerly holding her at arm's length by the waist, is much preoccupied by the proceedings of CLARISSA with SIR TREVOR.)

*Lady An.* Aloysius, dearly loved one, tell me, shall the little sitting-room be pink or blue?

*Aloy.* (preoccupied). I think, perhaps, a quiet plaid——

*Judge* (who has been watching them). Nearly finished your endearments? They're a little cloying!

*Clar.* (in affected surprise). Papa! you here already!

*Judge.* Yes, come now, be quick. I can't keep the Grand Jury waiting. Where shall I sit? Here? (Goes to chair up stage.)

*Aloy.* That will do excellently, Sir John. Permit me. (Arranges robes, then focusses, rather nervously.)

*Lady An.* Sir John, you must allow me to compliment you upon the impressive effect of your judicial robes.

*Judge.* Rather tasty, I think. But it's not so much the robes as the wig. There's a great deal more in this wig than you'd suppose, Miss Collins.

*Lady An.* That I can quite believe, Sir John.

*Judge.* Yes. Now observe. Without it (taking it off) I am simply an intellectual middle-aged gentleman of a refined and cultivated type; but with it, Miss Collins (putting it on), I am at once the embodiment of the abstract Majesty of the Law—three centuries of the concentrated wisdom of both Houses of Parliament in tabloid form. (Business of focussing.)

*Clar.* (aside to LADY ANGELA). Papa always keeps his wig by his bedside at night, and whenever argument runs high he puts it on, and mamma knocks under at once.

*Aloy.* How would you like to be taken, Sir John? Solemnly, as delivering a judgment?

*Judge.* No, I think not. Humorously, as cutting a judicial

joke. Judicial humour is my strong point. A trial at law is an extremely serious matter for both parties, and both parties are generally in a condition of heart-aching despondency until the verdict is delivered. I hold it to be a kind act, a considerate act, and a consolatory act on the part of the Judge to relieve that depression, to dissipate that despondency, and to cause both parties to forget, if possible, the important issues at stake by indulging them with a course of jocular comment—of light-hearted *facetie*, and in short, with a display of general a—a——

*Sir T.* Tomfoolery?

*Judge.* A—well, yes—thank you, Sir Trevor—that's not quite the word I wanted, but something of that description. I flatter myself that "Roars of laughter, in which the learned judge could not help joining," is a paragraph that appears more often in cases tried before me than in any other Court of Justice in the kingdom.

*Aloy.* (*timidly*). But, if I may venture to make a suggestion, Sir John, a jocular attitude would be scarcely in keeping with——

*Judge* (*angrily*). But you may *not* venture to make a suggestion, Mr. Parfitt. I am not here to receive suggestions! (*ALOYSIUS in great terror.*) I am here to be photographed in my own fashion, and unless I am photographed in my own fashion, I will not be photographed at all. (*Very angry.*)

*Clar.* But, papa, do listen to reason——

*Judge.* Great Seal! Haven't I been listening to reason all the time I've been talking? (*Getting up.*) However, there's an end of the matter. Call my carriage. (*Comes down.*)

*Aloy.* Oh, Sir John, pray don't be angry! Indeed, I meant for the best!

*Judge.* "Meant for the best!"

*Clar.* Papa, I'm so sorry I vexed you!

*Judge.* "Sorry you vexed me!"

*Sir T.* Come, Sir John, don't be severe with my darling Clarissa—poor little popsy-wopsy, tiddle toddlecums! (*Fondling her.*)

*Judge.* "Popsy-wopsy, tiddle toddlecums!" (*During this, ALOYSIUS has been expressing annoyance at SIR TREVOR's display of affection towards CLARISSA, and is gesticulating to him to refrain.*) • If you are an epileptic, sir, say so, and you shall be treated accordingly. (*Sulkily resumes his seat. ALOYSIUS at camera.*) I am but little accustomed to be dictated to, and I will not submit to it—I will not submit to it. (*Boiling with suppressed anger.*) Are you ready, sir?

*Aloy.* Quite ready, Sir John. (*JUDGE suddenly assumes a*



*grotesque and jocular attitude and expression, in strong contrast with his recent anger.*) Steady, Sir John—keep your eye upon this picture.

*Judge (furious).* I will not keep my eye upon that picture. I shall look where I please. *(Resumes jocular attitude.)*

*Aloy. (very frightened).* Now then—one, two, three, four! *(Puts cap on camera.)* Thank you, Sir John.

*Judge (resuming his fury).* And so you may, sir. It is the last time I put myself to this inconvenience to meet your wishes.

*(To Mrs. CRUMBLE).* Call my carriage. Good morning. *[Exit.*

*[As soon as he has gone CLARISSA rushes to ALOYSIUS, LADY ANGELA to SIR TREVOR.*

*Lady An.* Now that that grumpy old gentleman has gone we can talk at our ease.

*Clar.* Dearest Aloysius, you are vexed. Don't be angry with poor papa! He's really very funny in Court.

*Aloy.* It is not your papa, Clarissa, with whom I am vexed. I do think, Trevor (I am sure it's unintentional), but I do think that you and Clarissa overdo it.

*Sir T.* My dear fellow, I must play the game!

*[JUDGE heard speaking without. CLARISSA runs to SIR TREVOR, LADY ANGELA to ALOYSIUS. CLARISSA and SIR TREVOR as affectionate lovers, ALOYSIUS holding LADY ANGELA in a constrained attitude at arm's length.*

*JUDGE enters.*

*Judge.* My three-cornered hat—I forgot my three-cornered hat! Oh, here it is! *(Finds his hat and exit.)*

*Lady An.* Has he really gone, Clarissa?

*Clar.* Yes, dear; the carriage has driven off at last!

*[CLARISSA reverts to ALOYSIUS and LADY ANGELA to SIR TREVOR.*

*Aloy.* Then, my dear Clarissa, we should do well to repair at once to the Registrar, and beg the good man to unite us with all convenient despatch. I confess that it pains me to have to resort to an opposition establishment—it savours of disloyalty to my cloth—but there is no other way, and we will be married in church as soon as the civil process has made you mine beyond dispute. The fly is waiting.

*Sir T.* And when you come back it will be our turn to enlist that gentleman's good services—and then it will be our painful duty to break the news to our respective fathers-in-law—I to the Marquis—that won't be pleasant—

*Aloy.* And I to the Judge. That—that will require a little tact.

*Sir T.* Just a little tact. By the way, excuse me for two minutes. They've been altering the regimental uniform——

*Lady A.* What, again?

*Sir T.* Yes—and I want to send a wire to my tailor. I'll be back directly. *[Exit SIR TREVOR.]*

*Clar.* Are you ready, dear Aloysius?

*Aloy.* Yes, yes; I'm ready. But if you will allow me to make a suggestion, Clarissa, it seems to me that the hat and mantle you are wearing are scarcely in accordance with the modest and unobtrusive nature of the process to which we are about to submit ourselves. We—we desire rather to avoid observation than to court it.

*Clar.* Why, I bought this hat on purpose to do honour to the occasion! Besides, it's too late now—I can't go home and change.

*Lady An.* Let me make a suggestion. Pin up your skirt, take my bonnet and veil and apron and cloak, and then any one who sees you will be sure to take you for me.

*Aloy.* Really, my dear Clarissa, Lady Angela's kind and thoughtful proposal appears to me to solve the difficulty.

*Clar.* (*removing hat and mantle*). Do you think so? Well, if you wish it, of course it shall be done. But oh, Aloysius, I gave seven guineas for that hat!

*[Exit with ANGELA'S cloak, bonnet, veil, and apron, leaving her own behind.]*

*Aloy.* (*very respectfully*). And now, Lady Angela, that we are alone, permit me to express a modest hope that the perfunctory embraces which the unfortunate but autocratic necessities of the situation have compelled me to bestow upon you have been conceived and executed with as much delicacy and personal repression as the distressing circumstances of the case permitted.

*Lady An.* Mr. Parfitt, you have been, if anything, too discreet.

*Aloy.* Thank you, Lady Angela. If, in the reckless abandonment of the moment, I have been too fiery—if I should unhappily have exceeded the strict limit of what is customary between engaged couples, I beg you will not attribute it to a desire to take an unduly advantage of the relations which are supposed to exist between us.

*Lady An.* Mr. Parfitt, you have shown yourself throughout the transaction to be a gentleman who is actuated by an exaggeratedly delicate appreciation of what is due to a lady whom

circumstances have placed in a most difficult and equivocal situation.

*Aloy.* Lady Angela, I most respectfully beg to thank you for—

[*Gong.* At this moment the FAIRY ROSEBUD appears through back of scene. They are both conscious that a third person is present, though they have not seen her. ALOYSIUS suddenly changes his manner, and addressing LADY ANGELA with effusion, continues—

As I was saying, I respectfully thank you for the overwhelming love—the whole-souled affection—the unutterably tender devotion with which you have so amply endowed me, my respectfully adored young friend!

*Lady An.* (as if suddenly conscious of the presence of a third person). But hush, my Aloysius, we are observed!

[*They are much surprised at seeing the fairy.*

*Lady An.* Dear me, what a very singular young person!

*Aloy.* May I be permitted to ask—whom I have the pleasure of addressing!

*Rose.* I am the Fairy Rosebud. I am here  
To help both you and Mr. Parfitt, dear.  
Such love as yours we fairies much admire,  
And I'll afford the aid that you require.

*Aloy.* But there's some mistake—we are not in need of any assistance at present. And in this costume—and at a Vicarage! In all my experience I never saw anything so—so inadequate!

*Lady An.* It's perfectly scandalous—in a Vicarage!

*Rose.* I understand your feelings, and would spare 'em,  
But I'm a Fairy, and I've got to wear 'em.  
In the fond love that you've just now protested  
As a Good Fairy I'm much interested;  
Though threatened by a scheme of foulest tissue,  
Your love I'll pilot to a happy issue!

\* *Aloy.* But, really—

*Lady An.* I think, Mr. Parfitt, that if we make it quite clear to this young person that we are thoroughly competent to conduct our own affairs without supernatural intervention, she will, perhaps, be so good as to apply her protective machinery to some young couple to whom it may be of service.

*Aloy.* Really, Miss—a—a—I did not catch your name?

*Rose.* I am the Fairy Rosebud—I am here—

*Aloy.* Really, Miss Rosebud. I assure you that we have no occasion for your services. And if you are blessed with parents who are still living, may we suggest that you repair at once to

old Mr. and Mrs. Rosebud, and point out to them the absolute necessity of their providing you with an outfit that shall be in stricter accordance with prevailing prejudices.

*Rose.* Don't be absurd, but listen ere I go.  
A Wicked Demon, my official foe,  
Intends to carry off your bosom's pride—  
The fair Jane Collins, standing by your side—  
And place her in your hated rival's power:  
This he'll effect in less than half-an-hour.  
But do not fear, I shall be close at hand  
To thwart the ill my demon foe has planned.

[*Going to opening.*]

*Aloy.* But, my good woman, permit me to assure you that you are entirely mistaken in supposing—

*Rose.* Mistaken! Happily for both your sakes  
The Fairy Rosebud never makes mistakes:  
You'll live her faultless judgment to extol—  
But one word more—Beware of Alcohol! (*Disappears.*)

*Lady An.* Well, this places us in a pleasant predicament, Mr. Parfitt! That muddle-headed young woman is about to put her foot into it to an extent of which she has no notion.

*Aloy.* It's extremely embarrassing, Lady Angela. She wouldn't give me time to explain.

*Lady An.* And then, "Beware of Alcohol" indeed! As if we were addicted to anything of the kind.

*Aloy.* I am sure, Lady Angela, we are most abstemious—most abstemious. A glass of light claret or a little ginger beer—

*Lady An.* Do you really think she's a fairy?

*Aloy.* Well, Lady Angela, I set up no pretensions to be considered a judge of fairies, but she certainly appeared and disappeared in a most unaccountable manner.

*Lady An.* Here comes Clarissa—how astonished she will be—

*Aloy.* I think, perhaps, Lady Angela, it would be better for me to break this embarrassing little incident to Clarissa on our way to the Registrar's. Ah, here she is!

*Enter CLARISSA in LADY ANGELA'S bonnet, apron, cloak, streamers, etc., and looking, with her veil down, exactly as LADY ANGELA looked at her entrance.*

*Lady An.* My dear Clarissa, the disguise is perfect. No one would know you.

*Enter SIR TREVOR.*

*Sir T.* I've sent the wire. (*Sees CLARISSA and takes her for LADY ANGELA.*) My dear Angela, they'll be back in half-an-hour and then it will be our turn. (*About to kiss her, with his arm around her waist.*)

*Clar. (raising veil).* Sir Trevor, you mistake!

*Aloy.* Really, Trevor, it is getting beyond a joke. I don't want to be selfish, but I beg you to remember that, after all is said and done, Clarissa is engaged to me.

*Sir T.* My dear fellow, a thousand pardons! Really, Miss Whortle, I took you for Angela. I did, indeed. It's a compliment to the disguise, Miss Whortle, and should be so taken.

*Aloy.* Well, I think perhaps we had better be off before these compliments become overwhelming. By the way, Clarissa, a rather remarkable incident has happened. I'll tell you all about it as we go. As I was talking to Lady Angela—

[*Exeunt ALOYSIUS and CLARISSA, talking.*]

*Sir T. (to ANGELA).* Our turn next, Angela.

*Lady An.* Yes, our turn next! Oh, Trevor, when I gaze upon you and reflect that, solely to rescue me from the detestable clutches of a profligate old scarecrow you have consented to sacrifice the instincts, the emotion, the æsthetic essence of a lifetime, I am lost in adoring wonder!

*Sir T.* My dear Angela, you exaggerate—you do, indeed. It really gives me great pleasure to render you this service.

*Lady An.* I exaggerate nothing! One cannot exaggerate such heroic self-effacement. There are no words in the English language to express it. I doubt if it could be done even in German! How true it is that nobility of character is the only source of enduring love! Before I saw you I had formed my own ideal of manly perfection—it was not at all like you. But when I came to know the calm beauty of your character, the noble and undemonstrative heroism with which you had devoted yourself to the succour of the helpless and the oppressed, I realized how insignificant were questions of mere physical attributes, and I longed to soar into the moral Empyrean on the wings of such an Angel of Altruism as I had discovered my Trevor to be!

*Sir T.* Thank you very much. But, really, I am almost to be envied, for, if you will permit me to say so, you are really an extremely attractive lady.

*Lady An.* Attractive? bah! Why, look at me! What am

I? I ask you, am I the kind of woman to inspire a heroic passion?

*Sir T.* I think so—I think so. Pledged as I was to rescue, by process of matrimony, the very first oppressed woman I came across, without regard to age, station, or personal appearance, I consider myself most fortunate in having found an oppressed one who is not only endowed with considerable personal advantages, but who is, moreover, a very agreeable and intelligent companion.

*Lady An.* Ah, you say this to comfort me!

*Sir T.* No—no. When I think what you might have been and see what you are, I consider that I have really very little reason to complain.

*Lady An.* Oh, Trevor, how happy you make me!

*Sir T.* And now may I suggest that, as Mr. and Mrs. Parfitt may return at any moment, you would do well to clothe yourself in her hat and cloak? Then if we are seen on our way to the Registrar by anyone we know I shall be supposed to be merely taking a drive with the young lady to whom I am supposed to be engaged.

*Lady An.* How thoughtful you are! I won't be two minutes!

[Exit ANGELA.]

*Sir T. (looking after her).* Now that's a most heavenly girl, and I'm the very happiest man in the world! Dearest Angela! She little guesses that I have occupied myself for many nights past in composing a ballad in which the full intensity of my affection has been (not unhappily, I think) expressed.

[Sits down at harmonium—plays a Symphony. At this moment the DEMON ALCOHOL rises from trap immediately behind him, unperceived by SIR TREVOR. The DEMON is dressed like a man about town, but otherwise presents the same aspect as in Act I. SIR TREVOR sings the first note of the song, and the DEMON, standing behind him, joins in. SIR TREVOR wheels round on music stool, and looks coolly at him, glass in eye.]

*Al.* Good morning, guv'nor! Hope you're pretty well?

*Sir T.* May I ask whom I have the pleasure of addressing?

*Al.* Now, what d'ye take me for?

*Sir T.* Really it is difficult to say. Not the new curate, I should imagine.

*Al.* Bah! I'm no curate, though a man of merit.  
Buck up, old hoss! I'm your Familiar Sperrit!

*Sir T. (stiffly).* I recognize the familiarity.

Al.

I am here

To help you if you mean to persevere  
In your pursuit of Jane, attractive gipsy!  
Oh, she's a fascinating pipsy-wipsy!

[Digs SIR TREVOR in ribs.

Sir T. (*coldly*). If this conversation is to be pursued, I must beg that when you have occasion to refer to that lady, you will observe a becomingly respectful reticence. Otherwise——

Al.

All right, I'm fly, and don't you ever doubt it.  
Now give it lip, and tell us all about it.

Sir T. Really, sir, you make a very cool request. You can scarcely expect me to discuss my most delicate private affairs with the very first Demon I happen to come across.

Al.

To that remark I merely answered Pooh!  
If you won't tell me, why then I'll tell you.  
You love Jane Collins, nurse to some girl's mother,  
But—but (*bothered for rhyme*)—but she's a girl of taste, and  
loves another!

Sir T. Allow me to assure you that you entirely misconceive the situation. Miss Collins is no other than——

Al.

Now do be quiet: it's the worst of crimes  
To interrupt a poor devil of a Demon when he's fishing for  
his rhymes.  
To carry her away some means you search,  
And—and (*bothered for rhyme*)—and leave your hated rival  
in the lurch.

Sir T. Once for all——no, I *will* speak. Once for all I tell you that my intentions towards the young lady to whom you allude are of the most honourable description. In half an hour——

Al.

Get out! Don't try to veil your conduct shady.  
Why, Jane, by this time, is a married lady!

Sir T. Nothing of the kind, sir!

Al.

Oho! you roguey-pogey! bad young man!  
But never fear, I will assist your plan.  
Your rival shall be paid out, tit for tat.  
In half an hour you'll find her at your flat!

[Sinks through trap.

Sir T. Here—stop! Gone! What *can* he mean? Does he presume to suggest that I, Sir Trevor Mauleverer, the last representative of a long line of blameless Baronets, upon whose escutcheon there has never been the shadow of a shade, am capable of entertaining designs against the purity and peace of mind of my devoted Angela?—Angela, who will be my wife in half an hour! But this is what it is to be a Baronet in the Life

Guards. It is too generally assumed by those who derive their ideas from works of sensational fiction that we are all abandoned profligates! Even my old friend Aloysius seems to misconstrue my artificial attentions to his bride. In my moments of leisure I have composed a lament upon the subject which may tend, not infelicitously, to correct this unfortunate misconception.

[*Symphony in orchestra. He takes music from his pocket and comes down as if to sing. At this moment enter ALOYSIUS and CLARISSA; ALOYSIUS somewhat preoccupied, CLARISSA in high spirits.*

*Clarissa (dancing about the room).* We are married, Sir Trevor! Married, married, married! I am Mrs. Parfitt, Sir Trevor, and my beloved husband may defy my flinty-hearted father to do his worst!

*Sir T. (taking CLARISSA by both hands).* My dear Mrs. Parfitt, I heartily congratulate you.

*Aloy. (gently withdrawing her from SIR TREVOR, as if apprehensive that he is about to embrace her).* Yes. Thank you. I confess I do not contemplate the prospect of defying Sir John Whortle without a certain degree of nervous apprehension. I am afraid he may not be altogether pleased at what has occurred. (*Aside, sniffing.*) Curious smell of cheap lucifer matches!

*Sir T.* He'll be furious—simply volcanic——

*Aloy. (alarmed).* Oh, you think he will?

*Sir T.* I'm sure of it; but what of that? You can snap your fingers under his very nose, and he can do nothing.

*Aloy.* Oh, yes, I *could* do that. No doubt I *could* do that. But I'm not at all sure that snapping my fingers under the very nose of an extremely irritable Judge of the High Court is quite the best thing I do.

*Sir T.* You must practise. It's very easy. Like this——

[*SIR TREVOR snaps his fingers. ALOYSIUS imitates him with indifferent success.*

• *Enter ANGELA in CLARISSA's hat and cloak.*

*Lady An.* I'm quite ready, Trevor. Clarissa, my dearest Clarissa, a thousand congratulations! How do I look?

*Clar.* Oh, too sweet!

*Lady An.* Come, Trevor. (*Sniffing.*) What a curious smell of cheap lucifer matches!

*Sir T.* Yes. A rather remarkable incident has happened since you left the room.

*Lady An.* An incident?



*Sir T.* Yes. I'll tell you all about it as we go. (*Talking as he goes off.*) As I was sitting down to the harmonium just now——

[*Exeunt SIR TREVOR and ANGELA.*

*Clar.* (*at feet of ALOYSIUS*). And now, Aloysius, that we are alone together, and our married life has really begun, you must be frank with me and tell me all my faults, and I'll try to correct them.

*Aloy.* Will you, really, Clarissa? That is indeed joyful news. Now, in the first place, I think my little girl is disposed, perhaps, to attach undue importance to the matter of costly raiment.

*Clar.* Costly raiment?

*Aloy.* If you knew how well a modest garb becomes you—such as the dress you are now wearing——

*Clar.* Oh, Aloysius, I look a pretty guy in these clothes!

*Aloy.* Then I fear that frivolous and worldly distractions are not without a certain allurements for you.

*Clar.* Of course I like to amuse myself, dear. Harmless amusement——

*Aloy.* Oh, I was not referring to school-feasts and mothers' meetings. I allude to dinner parties, dances, and theatres.

*Clar.* Of course, Aloysius, I shall do exactly as you wish. But have you ever been to a theatre, dear?

*Aloy.* (*with energy*). Never! Most surely never!

*Clar.* They are really not so bad as you think. Good gracious! what's that!

[*The DEMON ALCOHOL appears through wall. Both rise, CLARISSA clinging to ALOYSIUS in great alarm.*

*Clar.* Oh, Aloysius, protect me!

*Aloy.* Sir, this intrusion is unseemly. Who are you, and whence do you come?

*Al.* I come from where it is extremely warm,  
A most unpleasant duty to perform.  
For your return I have for sometime tarried.

*Aloy.* (*shortly*). I am engaged.

*Al.* You're more than that—you're married!  
But you've a rival, though you may forget—  
A bold, bad, buccaneering Baronet!  
And though you fancy you can now pool-pool him,  
I am his agent—and I take you to him!

[*DEMON seizes CLARISSA, whisking her away from ALOYSIUS' arms on to trap. They slowly descend. ALOYSIUS exclaims, "Clarissa!" She screams, "Aloysius, save me!" He endeavours to follow,*

*but is restrained by half a score of imps, with flaming torches, who form a fiery circle round him. CLARISSA and DEMON disappear from view, CLARISSA holding on to edge of trap, from which she is with difficulty dislodged by imps.*

PICTURE. RED FIRE.

END OF ACT I.

## ACT II.

SCENE I.—CROQUET LAWN AT SIR JOHN WHORTLE'S COUNTRY HOUSE.

FAIRY ROSEBUD *appears through a rosebush.*

*Rose.* Now I wonder what has happened? Alcohol was to have met me here at four to report progress, but of course he's behind time. I do hope he hasn't made some stupid mistake! (*ALCOHOL appears through juniper bush.*) Oh, here you are at last! You're late!

*Al.* A thousand pardons! Driving here from town  
My brand-new Demon motor-car broke down;  
A puncture long delayed me—this fatality  
Affects one's character for puncture-ality.

*Rose.* Oh, don't talk nonsense! How are matters progressing?

*Al.* Capitally. I did just as you told me. The Clergyman and the Hospital Nurse were married by the Registrar this morning.

*Fairy.* Good!

*Al.* As soon as they returned home I appeared to them—tore the Hospital Nurse from her husband's arms, and conveyed her to Sir Trevor's flat, where she now is.

*Rose (much relieved).* Excellent! Nothing could be better! I was getting quite anxious. Ah, you don't know how we Good Fairies fret and worry when anything goes wrong! You see, we take such interest in our work, and we're so conscientious!

*Al.* It must be a wearing life. But look here, Rosy, I hope you won't leave her there too long. It's rather a compromising position for a young girl who's just married.

*Rose.* Well, you *are* a soft-hearted Demon!

*Al.* Not particularly. But, frankly, to snatch a newly-married bride from her husband's arms, and carry her off to the

flat of a wicked Baronet, is playing it rather low down, even for a gentleman in *my* profession. It's true I stuffed up the key-hole with beeswax, so he can't get at her. Still, you oughtn't to leave her there too long.

*Rose.* Well, you're a good fellow, and I'll take care that she's restored to her husband before any harm happens. I'll see to it at once. Now trot along like a good boy, and leave it all to me.

*Al.* But, Rosy—before I go—just one!

*Rose.* I won't! •Get along with you!

*Al.* Bother! [Vanishes through juniper bush.]

*Rose.* My fairies, hither!

[*Music.* Fairies appear tripping down stage. They make obeisance.]

*Rose.*

It has come to pass

There's a young girl of decent middle class  
To whom we've promised our protecting mercies :  
D'you know Jane Collins?

*1st Coryphée.* Well : her sphere's a nurse's.

*Rose.* Well, she is in mortal peril, there's no doubt of it,  
And you must help me, please, to get her out of it.

(*impressively*) She's in the power of Alcohol, my foe, (*Sensation.*)

And we must rescue her ; but ere you go,  
Dance on the sward before these stucco portals

(*to audience*) (Which I may state are Mr. Justice Whortle's),

And when you've finished wing yourselves away  
And bring Jane Collins here without delay!

[*Exit* FAIRY ROSEBUD.]

BALLET.

(*At the end the Fairies exeunt.*)

*Enter* MR. JUSTICE WHORTLE, in plain clothes.

*Judge.* Well, I've done an excellent day's work. A breach of promise, damages fifteen hundred ; a serious libel action, damages five thousand ; and a magnificent clerical scandal to top up with. They all "went" magnificently ! Court convulsed throughout ! Never heard such roars of laughter in a Court of Justice before ! But where's Clarissa ? I must tell Clarissa all about it. Clarissa ! (*Angrily.*) Where is that girl ? It's a most unaccountable thing, but whenever I want that girl she's— Halloo, sir ! What's the matter with you ?

*Enter* ALOYSIUS, breathless with terror and agitation.

*Aloy.* Sir John—a dreadful thing—a terrible thing has occurred. (*Panting.*) I—I hardly know how to begin !

*Judge.* Collect yourself, sir—and after you've collected yourself, recollect yourself, sir.

*Aloy.* I'm doing my best, Sir John ! Your daughter, sir——!

*Judge.* My daughter, sir? How are you concerned with my daughter, sir?

*Aloy.* Sir John, be prepared for a blow. Your daughter, Clarissa—

*Judge (with dignity).* If you allude to Miss Whortle, sir, be good enough so to describe her.

*Aloy.* Pardon me, it would be a misdescription. It—it would be untrue!

*Judge.* Untrue?

*Aloy. (trembling violently).* The lady who was Miss Whortle is now—Mrs. Parfitt!

*Judge (in a violent passion).* Why, you——!

*Aloy. (warningly).* Clergyman of the Church of England, Sir John!

*Judge (swallowing his fury).* Do you mean to tell me that you—you—with a stipend of two hundred a year—have presumed to marry my daughter?

*Aloy.* Yes, Sir John—in a way. I mean that we were married this morning before the Registrar!

*Judge.* Before the Registrar?

*Aloy.* Before the Registrar. I don't know when the Registrar was married, but, whenever it was, we were married before him. (*Aside.*) I don't know what I'm saying!

*Judge.* Well, of all the acts of audacity that have ever come under my notice—— (*Suddenly.*) And what will Sir Trevor say? Great Chancellor! what will Sir Trevor say?

*Aloy.* Oh, that's all right——

*Judge.* All right!

*Aloy.* Yes—he knows all about it, and he's delighted!

*Judge.* Delighted!

*Aloy.* Yes—he presents his compliments and begs me to explain that his engagement to Clarissa——

*Judge (furiously).* Miss Whortle!

*Aloy.* To Mrs. Parfitt—was a blind.

*Judge (astounded).* His engagement to Clarissa a blind! House of Lords and Commons!

*Aloy.* But—but that is not the worst——

*Judge (who is pacing up and down in great agitation).* It is! It is! There could be nothing worse! nothing!

*Aloy.* As soon as we returned from the cere—from the process—a Demon appeared——

*Judge (severely).* It served you right, sir! What less could you expect?

*Aloy.* And wrenching Cla—Mrs. Parfitt from my arms, carried her—down below!

*Judge.* Down? Where?

*Aloy.* It—it is impossible to say, Sir John. I can only conjecture, but I fear the worst. I have not seen Clarissa——

*Judge (furiously).* Miss Whortle!

*Aloy.* Mrs. Parfitt—since. And I have come here as fast as a hansom would carry me to implore your pardon and beg your assistance to recover her!

*Judge.* Recover her! How am I to recover her? A writ of Habeas Corpus doesn't run down there! (*Struggling with his fury.*) May a Judge's curse——

FAIRY ROSEBUD *appears through bush.*

*Rose.* Hold! Say not that which may not be unsaid!

*Judge.* And who may you be, madam?

*Rose (to ALOYSIUS).*

Although most stupidly your scheme is laid,  
My fairy power, which once you did disdain,  
Will rapidly put matters right again!

*Aloy.* Miss Rosebud, I cannot sufficiently thank you for your kind promise of assistance, or my regret for the thankless and inconsiderate attitude I adopted towards you this morning. If you can by any means restore to me my bride——

*Judge.* But, confound it, madam, they're married! How can you put that right? Whoever you are, you're certainly not the Judge Ordinary!

*Rose (ignoring him).*

I'm not concerned with this abrupt old man,  
My duty is to thwart the Demon's plan,  
And join again these two young lovers dear:  
(*Waving wand.*)

Jane Collins, come! Appear! Appear! Appear!

*Aloy.* But, pardon me, there's some mistake——

*Judge.* Jane Collins! Nobody wants Jane Collins!

[*LADY ANGELA rises through trap. She has been interrupted at her toilet and appears standing in front of looking-glass on a small toilet table, in dressing jacket, with her hair down and brush in her hand; also a long tail of false hair. JUDGE and ALOYSIUS put on their spectacles.*

*Lady An. (angrily).* What is the meaning of this most indelicate intrusion on my privacy? (*Sees ROSEBUD.*) Ah! I thought it was you. How dare you presume to bring me here before these people without waiting until I was fit to appear? (*During this she is doing up her hair.*) I never was submitted to such an outrage in my life—never! (*To ALOYSIUS and*

JUDGE.) I really beg your pardon, both of you, but—will you be so good as to look the other way for a moment, until I'm fit to be seen. (*JUDGE and ALOYSIUS take off their spectacles and look away.*)

Rose (*humbly*). I'm really awfully sorry, I had no idea that——

Lady An. No idea! No, you never have any ideas, except wrong ones!

Rose. I really meant to do you a good turn. Don't be cross with me or I shall cry! Indeed, I had no idea you were at your toilet, or I never should have thought of bringing you here! Do give credit at least for good intentions!

Lady An. (*her mouth full of hairpins*). I'll give you credit for being a thoroughly wrong-headed, meddling, mischievous little donkey!

Rose (*crying*). I'm not a donkey! I'm a g—g—good Fairy.

Lady An. You're a good-for-nothing Fairy! Why did you bring me here?

Rose (*sobbing*). Who, to rescue you from the b—bold—b—bad—b—baronet of course; and restore you to the arms of your own true love!

Lady An. I thought as much! Oh, you purblind little idiot! (*To JUDGE and ALOYSIUS*). You can look now.

[*She has finished with her hair. JUDGE and ALOYSIUS put on their spectacles again.*]

Aloy. Let us be just to Miss Rosebud. I have no doubt that the lady was actuated by a laudable motive, but she has gravely erred. I am neither engaged nor married to Miss Collins. My wife is Cla—(*checks himself as he catches the JUDGE's eye*) is the daughter of Mr. Justice Whortle!

Rose. Of Mr. Justice Whortle!

Judge. Yes, madam, of Mr. Justice Whortle, a Judge of the High Court of Judicature. Now this comes of meddling with matters you don't understand. I trust it may be a lesson to you.

Rose. I can't make it out! I'm quite bewildered!

Judge. I'll make it quite clear to you, ma'am——

Lady An. Yes, and I'll make it quite clear to you——

[*JUDGE, LADY ANGELA, and ALOYSIUS all proceed to explain at once. As they all speak together, very volubly and very excitedly, nothing definite is heard.*]

Rose (*stopping her ears and stamping angrily*). Will you all be quiet? (*They stop gradually, each wanting the last word.*) Alcohol! Come here! (*DEMON appears through vampire in bush.*) What does all this mean? Didn't I tell you to

carry off Mr. Parfitt's bride, the Hospital Nurse, and take her to Sir Trevor's flat?

*Aloy.* How discreditable!

*Al.* (*puzzled*). Well, so I did. (*ALOYSIUS, LADY ANGELA, JUDGE and FAIRY all begin to speak to him at once. Stopping his ears.*) Will you be quiet? (*All stop gradually as before.*)

*Judge.* Will you be good enough to tell me—what have you done with Miss Clarissa Whortle?

*Al.* Miss Whortle? Don't know the lady.

*Aloy.* Yes—Clarissa. (*Catches JUDGE's eye.*) Mrs. Parfitt. You took her from me, and I must beg you to restore her to me at once. Where is Cla—Mrs. Parfitt?

*Enter SIR TREVOR with CLARISSA.*

*Sir T.* Mrs. Parfitt is here. I found her at my flat, and brought her here without a moment's delay.

*Clar.* Aloysius!

*Lady An.* Trevor!

[*CLARISSA rushes to ALOYSIUS, LADY ANGELA rushes to SIR TREVOR. FAIRY aghast and tottering. DEMON puzzled.*]

*Aloy.* (*embracing CLARISSA*). Dearest, don't fear—I'll yield you up to no man!

*Rose* (*to DEMON*). You've been and carried off the wrong young woman!

[*FAIRY faints in JUDGE's arms. DEMON stands confounded. ALOYSIUS embraces CLARISSA. TREVOR embraces LADY ANGELA.*]

SCENE DARKENS. END OF SCENE 1.

## SCENE 2. CLOUDLAND.

DEMON ALCOHOL and FAIRY ROSEBUD *discovered*.

*Rose.* Well, we've made a nice mess of it between us!

*Al.* We've muddled it up somehow; but, frankly, Rosy, I cannot see that I'm to blame.

*Rose.* Don't "Rosy" me! You've simply capsized the entire fairy apple-cart, and what to do I don't know!

*Al.* My dear child, I'm extremely sorry, but I did exactly as you told me.

*Rose* (*angrily*). Did I or did I not tell you to carry off Jane Collins and take her to Sir Trevor's flat, and have you or have you not done so? I only ask that—that's all!

*Al.* You never said a word about Jane Colline—

*Rose.* What!

*Al.* You merely told me to carry off the hospital nurse who was engaged to Mr. Parfitt.

*Rose.* Well, suppose I did say "hospital nurse"—that's no reason why you should carry off Clarissa Whortle, who was never in a hospital in her life!

*Al.* The young woman was dressed like a hospital nurse, and had just been married to Mr. Parfitt; so I took her off to the flat of the Bold Bad Baronet, just as you told me. Oh, you *are* hard on a Fiend, Rosy, you are indeed!

*Rose.* There again—there's another mistake. He isn't a bad Baronet; he's a good Baronet, and is honourably in love with Jane Collins, and has married her like the real gentleman he is!

*Al.* Well you said you knew all about him. Anyway, we've made a nice mess of it between us!

*Rose.* It'll be a nice mess for me if it gets about! *I'm* not going to be put back among the extra ladies at a pound a week, and only allowed to walk on without a word to say! There's only one way out of it. We must transport them at once to the Revolving Realms of Radiant Rehabilitation, and transform them into Harlequin, Columbine, Clown, and Pantaloon. That will get us out of the difficulty, and no questions asked.

*Al.* Humph! Rather rough on these poor people, isn't it?

*Rose.* Oh, I never saw such a Demon as you—you're always raising conscientious difficulties! I ask you—isn't it the very greatest kindness that you can do two young people to change them into Harlequin and Columbine?

*Al.* It's a matter of taste. I shouldn't like it myself. And the others?

*Rose.* Oh, the others must take their chance. They'll all have a good time, any way. Now, away we go! Did you ever see the Revolving Realms of Radiant Rehabilitation—telegraphic address, "Realms"?

*Al.* Never.

*Rose.* Of course not. Demons are not admitted. Well, it's all Revolvers—

*Al.* (*startled*). What?

*Rose.* Yes. I mean everything turns round—like that. It makes you giddy at first, but you soon get used to it. You shall see a photo. (*Producing one.*) There—it's a sweet spot.

*Al.* Pretty, pretty! Are these real girls?

*Rose.* Yes—no expense spared. That scene cost five-and-twenty pounds, without the gas.

*Al.* Might I have a peep?

*Rose.* Certainly not! Never heard of such a thing! Now—toddle!



*Al. Ta! ta! See you later on! (Descends through trap.)*

*[ROSEBUD waves wand. Scene disappears. Trap half opens, and DEMON slyly puts his head through. FAIRY sees him, and says: "Now that's a most ungentlemanly thing to do!" DEMON disappears. By this time scene has cleared off, revealing—*

### GRAND TRANSFORMATION SCENE.

#### THE REVOLVING REALMS OF RADIANT REHABILITATION.

*SIR TREVOR, LADY ANGELA (in her nurse's dress, ALOYSIUS, and JUDGE (in full robes and full-bottomed wig), discovered, looking up stage with their backs to the audience (SIR TREVOR represented by a "double"). The FAIRY ROSEBUD goes up stage and stands on pedestal.*

*Rose. Attend to me—your destinies are strange:  
Prepare to undergo a startling change.  
Happy young lovers who have plighted troth,  
A rich and rare award attends you both.  
You, Mr. Parfitt, a new life begin,  
As twirling, twittering, glittering Harlequin!*

*Aloy. As what? I beg your pardon, I didn't catch that remark.*

*Rose. As twirling, twittering, glittering Harlequin!*

*Aloy. But, pardon me, I don't know what that is.*

*Rose. You'll soon learn—it's quite easy. Come, Mr. Parfitt, you must do as you're told.*

*[She touches him with wand. His clothes fly off him, and he is changed to Harlequin, retaining his spectacles.*

*Aloy. But this is most embarrassing. I beg you will return me my coat and things at once. What on earth have I got on? This is certainly not the underclothing I put on this morning.*

*Rose. Now you must dance, you know.*

*Aloy. But really I can't dance. It's quite out of my line.*

*Rose. Then I'll give you a lesson.*

*[Waves wand over him. ALOYSIUS makes involuntary galvanic movements, awkwardly suggesting "animation" business.*

*Rose. You, Jane—his faithful Jane—henceforth shall shine  
With him as his most loving Columbine!*

*Lady An. Indeed I shall do nothing of the kind! Are you aware that you are addressing the Lady Angela Mauleverer, and that this gentleman is my husband? (Indicating SIR TREVOR.)*

*Rose. I think you are a very obstinate young woman. Will you do as I tell you? You must—it's the game!*

*Aloy.* (who has been dancing very awkwardly, stops). But permit me to assure you that this lady is not related to me in any way whatever. The arrangement you suggest is extremely inconvenient and unbecoming, and must prove most compromising to both of us.

*Rose.* I can't go into that. Will you or will you not change into Columbine?

*Lady An.* No, I will not.

*Rose.* Then I shall have to resort to force. Give me my wand.

[Takes wand and waves it. LADY ANGELA changes to Columbine.]

*Lady An.* Well, of all the intolerably disgraceful liberties—! (Becomes suddenly conscious of her ballet skirts.) Oh! oh!

[Bends her knees so that skirts touch the ground.]

*Rose.* Come, dance—both of you!

*Lady An.* Never! Give me back my frills directly!

*Rose.* Oh dear! dear! dear!

[Waves wand. ALOYSIUS and LADY ANGELA dance, ALOYSIUS galvanically as before. LADY ANGELA with her knees bent.]

*Lady An.* (dancing). Oh, Mr. Parfitt—pray don't look!

*Aloy.* (dancing). Not for bishoprics, Lady Angela!

*Judge.* { But I energetically protest—

*Sir T.* { Angela, I must beg you to desist— } (Speaking together.)

*Rose.* And as for you, you old High Court buffoon,  
Keep up that character as Pantaloon!

[JUDGE changes to Pantaloon, his wig flying into the air. He comes down leaning on crutch-stick, and coughing.]

*Judge.* Deary me! it's not as great a change as I should have supposed! (Looking at scene). Oh, what a lot of barley sugar!

*Rose.* And you, Sir Trevor, wander through the town,  
As merry madcap mischief-making Clown!

[SIR TREVOR'S "double" waltzes off stage, the real SIR TREVOR (as Clown) taking his place.]

*Sir T.* Hallo! Here we are again! (Dancing about.) Oh dear, I do feel so loose and careless! (Sees LADY ANGELA.) Oh, what a pretty butterfly! Catchée! catchée! catchée! (Pursues her, then suddenly.) Hallo!

*Lady An.* (anxiously). What is it, dear Trevor?

*Sir T.* (diving deep in his pockets). I've lost my Sunday farden!

*Lady An.* Oh, is that all! (*relieved*)—that is quite unimportant! (*Aside.*) Excessive altruism has affected his reason!

[*FAIRY ceases to wave wand, SIR TREVOR suddenly appears as one dazed. He gradually reverts to his original demeanour.*

*Sir T.* Angela! What has happened? What does it all mean? Am I dreaming?

*Lady An.* Alas, no! It is but too real! And oh, Trevor, how changed—how sadly changed you are!

*Sir T.* But tell me what has happened?

*Aloy.* Trevor, my dear old friend, we have all undergone a remarkable, and, to me, quite unaccountable, change. I am led to believe that, in my case, it is the reward of a virtuous life. If that be so, the moral that is to be drawn from it is deplorable.

*Judge.* A more flagrant case of Contempt of Court I have never encountered. I have had experience of many cases of contempt of the Court over which I preside, but never anything to equal this!

*Sir T. (to ROSEBUD).* Madam, you have presumed to take a series of unwarrantable and most unbecoming liberties with my lady and myself. You have, moreover, dared to interfere in a most discreditable manner with my friend, Mr. Parfitt, and with his father-in-law, Sir John Whortle. (Oblige me by bending your knees, my dear Angela.) I desire to give you notice that I shall at once place the matter in the hands of my solicitor!

*Rose.* In the whole course of my experience I've never had to do with such an obstinate troupe of pantomimists. But you're quite helpless—I shall never be very far off, and whenever I wave my wand you'll be obliged to play the game! Now begin!

[*Waves wand. Pantomime rally, SIR TREVOR and the JUDGE doing the "business" like old hands. ALOYSIUS dancing automatically and LADY ANGELA dancing as gracefully as is consistent with extreme propriety. SIR TREVOR and JUDGE "give the slap." All four form ring and dance round. ALOYSIUS and LADY ANGELA dance off, SIR TREVOR, on JUDGE'S back off.*

SCENE CLOSES.

## SCENE 2.—PASTRYCOOK'S SHOP AND CHEESEMONGER'S.

*Enter LADY ANGELA and ALOYSIUS (as HARLEQUIN and COLUMBINE) very depressed.*

*Lady An.* This is a most embarrassing state of things, Mr. Parfitt.

*Aloy.* Terrible, Lady Angela, terrible! And so entirely unforeseen. Leaving my parish at a moment's notice will, I fear, involve a most angry interview with my churchwardens. And what explanation can I give? I can't imagine what has happened!

*Lady An.* Oh, I know what has happened well enough! That meddlesome fairy has taken the liberty of changing us into Harlequin and Columbine.

*Aloy. (puzzled).* Harlequin and Columbine?

*Lady An.* Yes. I've often seen it happen to other people at Christmas time, but I never, never thought it would happen to me.

*Aloy.* I beg your pardon—it's extremely stupid of me—but I cannot quite remember—am I a Harlequin or a Columbine?

*Lady An.* Neither—you're a Harlequin, and a very bad one.

*Aloy.* Oh. I'm extremely sorry, Lady Angela, to appear to be so uninstructed upon a point of knowledge that seems to be so generally understood, but what, exactly, are the duties of a Harlequin?

*Lady An.* Well, you'll have to dance polkas and hornpipes about the streets with me.

*Aloy.* In the mud—and in all weathers?

*Lady An.* Certainly.

*Aloy.* I shall require my goloshes.

*Lady An.* Then you'll have to change things.

*Aloy. (eagerly, alluding to his clothes).* Shall I be permitted to change these things?

*Lady An.* No, no. You'll have to change things into other things. For instance, a man comes along in a fifteen hundred pound motor-car with "FISCAL POLICY" on it. You slap the bar with your bat, and it changes into a costermonger's barrow labelled "FREE FOOD FOR EVERYBODY."

*Aloy.* But that is not at all in accordance with my political views!

*Lady An.* Then you'll have to jump through people's windows into their houses.

*Aloy.* I? Never! No consideration shall ever induce me to take such a liberty! It would be a most unpardonable intrusion upon the domestic privacy of an absolute stranger.

Nothing could excuse it. Ah, here at last is Sir Trevor in his new uniform. I am given to understand that these constant changes are very expensive to young officers.

*Enter SIR TREVOR as CLOWN.*

*Sir T.* Angela! at last we meet!

*Lady An. (rushing to his arms).* Trevor—my beloved husband—where in the world have you been?

*Sir T.* At the Law Courts, making butter-slides for the Lords Justices, while the learned Judge bonneted the jurymen-in-waiting. The Fairy was present all the time, and we had to conduct ourselves in a manner which was an absolute outrage on the most rudimentary sense of decency!

*Lady An.* My poor high-minded darling!

*Sir T.* But whom have you with you? Not Aloysius? My dear fellow, I'm delighted to see you!

*Aloy.* Yes, Trevor, I am that most misplaced man!

*Lady An.* He has been so good to me—so noble! He has always looked the other way!

*Sir T. (much affected).* My dear friend! (*Grasps his hand.*)

*Aloy.* Tell me, Trevor, have you seen my Clarissa?

*Sir T.* Not recently, but here comes the learned Judge, her father. He may give you news of her.

*Enter JUDGE as PANTALON.*

*Aloy.* Sir John, if you will permit one who has but little claim on your tolerance to express his profound sympathy with you in the painful degradation to which you have been submitted——

*Judge.* Not a word, sir! You have robbed an elderly gentleman of his daughter!

*Aloy.* But she loved me so tenderly, and you would have wedded her to one with whom she would have been utterly miserable. (*Recollects that SIR TREVOR is present.*) Oh! I—I beg your pardon——

*Sir T.* Not at all. I should have made a most unsuitable husband for Miss Whortle, whereas with Angela——

*Enter FAIRY ROSEBUD.*

*Rose.* Oh, here you are, all of you! I've been looking for you everywhere. Now, this loafing won't do. Come, get to work! Jane Collins (*addressing LADY ANGELA*), leave Sir Trevor and rejoin Mr. Parfitt.

*Lady An.* But Sir Trevor is my husband——

Rose. Not a word! I'm really surprised at you! A Columbine leaving her Harlequin to hug a Clown! Such a thing was never heard of before! (LADY ANGELA sadly rejoins ALOYSIUS.) Now, begin and enjoy yourselves at once! No nonsense! Come!

[*Waves wand. They resume their pantomimic characters.*

*Music.* ANGELA and ALOYSIUS dancing together as before. SIR TREVOR and JUDGE go to cheesemonger's shop, lick butter and steal string of sausages. Business of both trying to cram sausages into their pockets, each beginning at opposite ends. ALOYSIUS slaps SIR TREVOR on back with wand, and then dances off with LADY ANGELA. SIR TREVOR thinks blow was inflicted by JUDGE, and gives him the "slap." JUDGE falls backwards. SIR TREVOR picks him up by his breeches.

*Enter PASTRYCOOK from shop, with large placard—"Wanted a handy young man." Displays it to audience and places it against shop-front. Re-enters shop.*

Sir T. Oh, he wants a handy young man! I'll apply for the situation!

Judge. Yes, yes, Joey—go and try—there's a good boy!

[SIR TREVOR slaps three times on door post, then lies across doorway. PASTRYCOOK comes out and tumbles over him.

Sir T. (with his hand on his heart). Oh, I beg yer parsnips!

[PASTRYCOOK very angry, and expresses his feelings in gesture. SIR TREVOR takes him confidentially by the arm.

Sir T. I say, do you want a handy young man?

[PASTRYCOOK's anger vanishes, and he expresses that he does.

Sir T. Then I'm the chap for you! Tuppence a month, paid the year before next, and find my own motor-car!

[PASTRYCOOK is pleased with the suggested terms, takes off his apron, and puts it on to SIR TREVOR, then exit into shop. Apron much too long. SIR TREVOR stumbles over it half-a-dozen times. During this JUDGE has cautiously crept into PASTRYCOOK's shop, and stolen a tray of sausage rolls.

Judge. Look here, Joey! See what I've found!

Sir T. Oh, what bee-youtiful sausage rolls! Let's sit down, and I'll divide 'em.

the *animus furandi* must be proved, or reasonably presumed. In the absence of the *mens rea* the case comes under neither statute nor common law. I can lay my hand upon my heart and proudly say that, to all intents and purposes, I am innocent of this larceny! (*Much agitated.*)

*Sir T.* Judge, I believe you. (*Grasping his hand.*) We are two most unhappy and most deeply injured men whom an unholy influence compels to commit outrages from which our manhood recoils. (*FAIRY enters and listens.*) For instance, I perceive a nursemaid approaching wheeling a double perambulator, and accompanied by a Corporal Major of my own regiment of Household Cavalry. Conceive my distress when I tell you that I instinctively feel that it will be my painful duty to trip up that Corporal Major, and rob the poor girl of her hat, boa, and other cheap finery, while you sit upon the perambulator, and squash her helpless innocents!

*Judge (horrified).* No, no! I am a father—I cannot do it—I cannot do it!

[*FAIRY waves her wand; they resume their pantomimic characters.*

*Sir T.* Oh, here's such a lover-ly gal! Oh, nicey-spicey! Nyum, nyum, nyum!

*Judge.* Yes, she's a beauty, Joey—she's a beauty!

[*SIR TREVOR takes a pound of butter from cheesemonger's shop, and makes butter-slide. Enter nursemaid with perambulator with life-guardsmen as described. Soldier slips down on butter-slide, and makes ineffectual attempts to get up. Nursemaid proceeds, not having noticed what happened. SIR TREVOR goes up to nurse saying, "I loves yer to substruction!" Steals her hat, feather boa, and parasol, and puts them on. JUDGE sits on perambulator, and children squeal. Nurse runs off screaming. SIR TREVOR pushes perambulator off, walking affectedly like a woman. Soldier by this time has got up, and taking SIR TREVOR for nursemaid, walks alongside, flirting.*

[*FAIRY remains, leaning on wand, and looking regretfully after them.*

*Rose.* Poor fellows! I'm really sorry for them. A truer, stauncher English gentleman than Sir Trevor doesn't exist, and it's really sad to see him reduced to the condition of a dishonest street buffoon! And his bride—a noble lady of exalted rank as it appears—doomed to dance through life in the society and companionship of a gentleman who, worthy though he be, is

nevertheless little more than a casual acquaintance! I've been very stupid over this, and I begin to think I've mistaken my profession.

DEMON ALCOHOL *appears through scene.*

*Al.* Why, Rosy, you seem out of sorts. What's wrong?

*Rose.* Well, the fact is I'm not at all comfortable. These poor people whom I've transformed—highly respectable, all of good social position, and much looked up to in their respective capacities—and we've taken this monstrous liberty with them just to save our faces, and avoid confessing that we've made donkeys of ourselves!

*Al.* Ye—es. I always thought it rather an unhandsome thing to do.

*Rose.* What, really?

*Al.* Yes. It was a shifty way out of the difficulty, and I hate anything underhanded.

*Rose.* Do you? Upon my word, you're rather a dear!

*Al.* The fact is I'm not in love with my profession, and I'm thinking of retiring from business and selling the stock, fixtures, and goodwill at a valuation.

*Rose.* Are you? Well, now, if you did *that*—— (*Coyly.*)

*Al.* (*sitting by her on front of shop.*) Yes, if I did that?

*Rose.* And never got tipsy any more——

*Al.* Eh? Oh, well, yes——

*Rose.* And went through a course of waters to improve your complexion——

*Al.* I see. Marienbad.

*Rose.* Well, I don't know but that I should be disposed to say (*very bashfully*) "yes," if we could only find a clergyman who would consent to perform the ceremony! Don't! You do squeeze so, I never did!

*Al.* You would! Oh, Rosy, Rosy, Rosy, what a cosy little Rosy-posy you are! As for a clergyman, there's Mr. Parfitt! He'd do it.

*Rose.* I don't know—I'm not so sure about that, and I fancy he's just a teeny weeny wee bit vexed with me for changing him into Harlequin. People are very ungrateful. However, we can but ask him; he's now at the Vicarage trying to jump through the portrait of his great aunt, for practice. We'll go and speak to him at once.

SOME DARKENS.



SCENE THE LAST.—THE VICARAGE, AS IN ACT I.

[SIR TREVOR, JUDGE, ALOYSIUS, and LADY ANGELA, discovered in their pantomime characters, all in very low spirits. JUDGE smoking cigar. SIR TREVOR lighting cigarette. LADY ANGELA at SIR TREVOR'S feet. ALOYSIUS at harmonium, playing "The Lost Chord."]

*Lady An.* Thank you, Mr. Parfitt, you play charmingly; your musical gifts will help to make the time pass during our enforced seclusion.

*Aloy.* There is but one course open to us, Lady Angela—to confine ourselves strictly within the four walls of the Vicarage, and to deny ourselves to all comers while this embarrassing state of things continues. Mrs. Crumble, my housekeeper, to whom I have explained everything, is discretion itself, and no one will know anything about our most painful, and, to me, quite unaccountable adventures.

*Judge.* Mr. Parfitt, you have acted with timely discretion. It is most important that the discreditable events with which we have been associated should be kept strictly to our four selves.

*Sir T.* Most certainly. No one else must ever know.

*Judge.* Except, of course, Clarissa. I see Clarissa coming; we must necessarily take her into our confidence, and in acknowledgment of the services you have rendered me, Mr. Parfitt, I withdraw my opposition to your union, and congratulate you both on having acquired each other.

*Enter CLARISSA with "The Times" in her hand. She rushes to ALOYSIUS.*

*Clar.* Aloysius—my own!

*Aloy.* Clarissa—I mean, Mrs. Parfitt—

*Judge.* No, no—(with an effort)—you may call her Clarissa now!

*Aloy.* May I? Oh, thank you, Sir John! Clarissa, dearest girl, at last we meet!

*Judge (overcome).* Bless you, my children! bless you!

*Clar.* Oh, papa, how odd you look in that dress! And Aloysius, how strange to see you thus!

*Aloy.* Dearest Clarissa, I will explain all.

*Clar.* It is unnecessary. I know everything.

*All.* What!!!

*Clar.* Everybody knows—it's all over the town! Here's a favourable notice, a column and a half long, in—of all papers—*The Times!*

*Judge.* Ruined! Ruined!

*Sir T.* A favourable notice in *The Times*? Let me see it.  
[*Takes paper and opens it hurriedly.*]

*All.* Read it! Read it!

*Sir T. (reads).* "Thereupon the Fairy Rosebud transported all the principal characters to the Revolving Realms of Radiant Rehabilitation (a scene inspired, no doubt, by the Horatian description of the Groves of the Platonic Academeia), and there effected a transformation, clearly suggested by the First and Second Essences of the Categories of Aristotle. Lady Angela became a graceful and singularly modest Columbine, whose movements were widely differentiated from the Dithyrambic Bacchanalia of the Attic-Ionic race——"

*Lady An.* Yes! I should think so!

*Sir T. (continuing).* "Mr. Parfitt will, perhaps, with a little practice, develop into an agile Harlequin."

*Aloy.* Yes. I was getting on nicely.

*Judge (taking the paper from SIR TREVOR).* "While Sir Trevor's Clown, which recalled the pantomimic triumphs of Pylades and Bathyllus——"

*Sir T. (taking the paper from JUDGE).* "Was ably supported by Mr. Justice Whortle's Pantaloon, a marvellous picture of senile infamy, having but little in common with the Ciceronic conception of dignified old age."

*Judge.* Ruined! My instant removal from the Bench will be pre-emptorily demanded by both Houses of Parliament!

*Aloy.* The Bishop and all my parishioners! How shall I explain it all to them?

*Lady An.* My father the Marquis! It will break even his stony old heart!

*Sir T.* And I shall be tried by Court-martial for conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman!

[*Wall opens.* FAIRY ROSEBUD appears in plain clothes.

*All the characters at once begin to act pantomimically.*

LADY ANGELA dancing, ALOYSIUS endeavouring to  
 \* jump through his great aunt's portrait. SIR TREVOR  
 taking red-hot poker out of fire and burning JUDGE,  
 who runs off. He is replaced by a "double," who  
 enters immediately.

*Rose.* Stop! (*All stop.*) It's not necessary to do that.  
 (*They resume their original characters.*) I—I have come to  
 make an interesting announcement. I—I have got a young  
 man!

*Sir T.* It is nothing to us, madam, It is no concern of  
 ours,

*Rose.* Now don't be so cross when I'm so happy! (*Goes to wing.*) Come in, George—don't be shy!

[*DEMON ALCOHOL enters very bashfully in plain clothes, his head somewhat humanized by absence of horns and his wearing a smooth black wig. His complexion is improved, and he has an air of having done his best to look respectable.*

*Rose (coolly).* This is my young man! (*Aside to DEMON ALCOHOL.*) Buck up, George, it's all right—they can't eat you! (*To ALOYSIUS.*) We're going to be married, and we want you to perform the ceremony!

*Aloy.* Impossible! On no consideration whatever!

*Lady An.* I should think not indeed!

*Rose (disappointed).* Oh, Mr. Parfitt, you *are* ungrateful! Such a beautiful Harlequin as I made you!

*Aloy.* I decline altogether to have any dealings with persons of your description!

*Judge.* Quite out of the question!

*Rose.* But please we've both decided to retire from business as soon as we can make the necessary arrangements—haven't we, George?

*Al. (civilly).* Yes, sir. I'm thinking of buying a snug little concern in the firework line.

*Rose.* Yes. And I'm going into the typewriting!

*Aloy.* Well, in that case, and if you really mean to abandon your present discreditable calling, I consent on condition that, before the ceremony is performed, you restore us all to our original individualities.

*Judge.* Mind, all.

*Sir T.* All.

*Lady An.* All.

*Rose.* All!

[*She waves her wand. Scene darkens for a moment. When the lights are turned up SIR TREVOR, LADY ANGELA, ALOYSIUS, and JUDGE have been changed back to their original characters—SIR TREVOR, LADY ANGELA, and ALOYSIUS by means of "doubles," JUDGE (who left stage at FAIRY'S entrance) appearing "in propria personâ." FAIRY and DEMON kneel. JUDGE on a chair standing over them and blessing them. ALOYSIUS embracing CLARISSA, and SIR TREVOR embracing LADY ANGELA.*

# THE GRAND DUKE;

## THE STATUTORY DUEL.

*A COMIC OPERA,*

IN TWO ACTS.

*Produced at the Savoy Theatre, London, under the management of  
Mr. R. D'Oyly Carte, on Saturday, March 7th, 1896.*

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

RUDOLPH, <i>Grand Duke of Pfennig</i>	
<i>Halbpfennig</i> ... ..	MR. WALTER PASSMORE.
ERNEST DUMMKOPF, <i>a Theatrical</i>	
<i>Manager</i> ... ..	MR. C. KENNINGHAM.
LUDWIG, <i>his Leading Comedian</i> ...	MR. RUTLAND BARRINGTON.
DR. TANNHÄUSER, <i>a Notary</i> ... ..	MR. SCOTT RUSSELL.
THE PRINCE OF MONTE CARLO ...	MR. SCOTT FISHE.
VISCOUNT MENTONE ... ..	MR. CARLTON.
BEN HASHBAZ, <i>a Costumier</i> ... ..	MR. WORKMAN.
HERALD ... ..	MR. JONES HEWSON.
THE PRINCESS OF MONTE CARLO,	
<i>betrothed to RUDOLPH</i> ... ..	MISS EMMIE OWEN.
THE BARONESS VON KRAKENFELDT,	
<i>betrothed to RUDOLPH</i> ... ..	MISS ROSINA BRANDRAM.
JULIA JELICOE, <i>an English Comédi-</i>	
<i>enne</i> ' ... ..	M <sup>D</sup> ME. ILKA VON PALMAY.
LISA, <i>a Soubrette</i> ... ..	MISS FLORENCE PERRY.
OLGA \	/ MISS MILDRED BAKER.
GRETCHEN	MISS RUTH VINCENT.
BERTHA	MISS JESSIE ROSE.
ELSA	MISS ETHEL WILSON.
MARTHA	MISS BEATRICE PERRY.

*Chamberlains, Nobles, Actors, Actresses, &c.*

### ACT I.

PUBLIC SQUARE OF SPEISESAAL.

### ACT II.

HALL IN THE GRAND DUCAL PALACE.

DATE—1750.

# THE GRAND DUKE;

OR,

## THE STATUTORY DUEL.

### ACT I.

SCENE.—*Market Place of Speisesaal, in the Grand Duchy of Pfennig Halbpennig. A well, with decorated iron-work. GRETCHEN, BERTHA, OLGA, MARTHA, and other members of ERNEST DUMMKOPF'S theatrical company are discovered, seated on several small tables, enjoying a repast in honour of the nuptials of LUDWIG, his leading comedian, and LISA, his soubrette.*

#### CHORUS.

Won't it be a pretty wedding?  
Doesn't Lisa look delightful?  
Smiles and tears in plenty shedding—  
Which in brides of course is rightful.  
One might say, if one were spiteful,  
Contradiction little dreading,  
Her bouquet is simply frightful—  
Still, it is a pretty wedding!  
Oh, it is a pretty wedding!  
Such a pretty, pretty wedding!

*Elsa.* • If her dress is badly fitting,  
Theirs the fault who made her *trousseau*.

*Bertha.* If her gloves are always splitting,  
Cheap kid gloves, we know, will do so.

*Olga.* • If her wreath is all lop-sided,  
That's a thing one's always dreading.

*Gret.* If her hair is all untied,  
Still it is a pretty wedding!

*Chorus.* Oh, it is a pretty wedding!  
Such a pretty, pretty wedding!

## CHORUS.

Here they come, the couple plighted—  
 On life's journey gaily start them.  
 Soon to be for aye united,  
 Till divorce or death shall part them.

[LUDWIG and LISA come forward.]

## DUET.—LUDWIG and LISA.

*Lud.* Pretty Lisa, fair and tasty,  
 Tell me now, and tell me truly,  
 Haven't you been rather hasty?  
 Haven't you been rash unduly?  
 Am I quite the dashing *sposo*  
 That you fancy could depict you?  
 Perhaps you think I'm only so-so?

[*She expresses admiration.*]

Well, I will not contradict you!  
*Chorus.* No, he will not contradict you!  
*Lisa.* Who am I to raise objection?  
 I'm a child, untaught and homely—  
 When you tell me you're perfection,  
 Tender, truthful, true, and comely—  
 That in quarrel no one's bolder,  
 Though dissensions always grieve you—  
 Why, my love, you're so much older  
 That, of course, I must believe you!  
*Chorus.* Yes, of course, she must believe you!

## CHORUS.

If he ever acts unkindly,  
 Shut your eyes and love him blindly—  
 Should he call you names uncomely,  
 Shut your mouth and love him dumbly—  
 Should he rate you, rightly—leftly—  
 Shut your ears and love him deafly.

Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

Thus and thus and thus alone  
 Ludwig's wife may hold her own!

[LUDWIG and LISA sit at table.]

*Enter* NOTARY TANNHÄUSSER.

*Not.* Hallo! Surely I'm not late?

[*All chatter unintelligibly in reply.*]

*Not.* But, dear me, you're all at breakfast! Has the wedding taken place?

[*All chatter unintelligibly in reply.*]

*Not.* My good girls, one at a time, I beg. Let me understand the situation. As solicitor to the conspiracy to dethrone the Grand Duke—a conspiracy in which the members of this company are deeply involved—I am invited to the marriage of two

of its members. I present myself in due course, and I find, not only that the ceremony has taken place—which is not of the least consequence—but the wedding breakfast is half eaten—which is a consideration of the most serious importance.

[LUDWIG and LISA come down.]

*Lud.* But the ceremony has *not* taken place. We can't get a parson!

*Not.* Can't get a parson! Why, how's that? They're three a penny!

*Lud.* Oh, it's the old story—the Grand Duke!

*All.* Ugh!

*Lud.* It seems that the little imp has selected this, our wedding day, for a convocation of all the clergy in the town to settle the details of his approaching marriage with the enormously wealthy Baroness von Krakenfeldt, and there won't be a parson to be had for love or money until six o'clock this evening!

*Lisa.* And as we produce our magnificent classical revival of *Troilus and Cressida* to-night at seven, we have no alternative but to eat our wedding breakfast before we've earned it. So sit down, and make the best of it.

*Gret.* Oh, I should like to pull his Grand Ducal ears for him, that I should! He's the meanest, the cruellest, the most spiteful little ape in Christendom!

*Olga.* Well, we shall soon be freed from his tyranny. To-morrow the Despot is to be dethroned!

*Lud.* Hush, rash girl! You know not what you say.

*Olga.* Don't be absurd! We're all in it—we're all tiled, here.

*Lud.* That has nothing to do with it. Know ye not that in alluding to our conspiracy without having first given and received the secret sign, you are violating a fundamental principle of our Association?

#### SONG.—LUDWIG.

By the mystic regulation  
Of our dark Association,  
Ere you open conversation  
With another kindred soul,  
You must eat a sausage-roll! (*Producing one.*)

*All.* You must eat a sausage-roll!

*Lud.* • If, in turn, he eats another,  
That's a sign that he's a brother—  
Each may fully trust the other.  
It is quaint and it is droll,  
But it's bilious on the whole.

*All.* Very bilious on the whole.



*Lud.* It's a greasy kind of pasty,  
Which, perhaps, a judgment hasty  
Might consider rather tasty :  
Once (to speak without disguise)  
It found favour in our eyes.

*All.* It found favour in our eyes.

*Lud.* But when you've been six months feeding  
(As we have) on this exceeding  
Bilious food, it's no ill-breeding  
If at these repulsive pies  
Our offended gorges rise !

*All.* Our offended gorges rise !

*Martha.* Oh, bother the secret sign ! I've eaten it until  
I'm quite uncomfortable ! I've given it six times already to-day  
—and (*whimpering*) I can't eat any breakfast !

*Bertha.* And it's so unwholesome. Why, we should all be as  
yellow as frogs if it wasn't for the make-up !

*Lud.* All this is rank treason to the cause. I suffer as much  
as any of you. I loathe the repulsive thing—I can't contemplate  
it without a shudder—but I'm a conscientious conspirator, and if  
you won't give the sign I will. (*Eats sausage roll with an effort.*)

*Lisa.* Poor martyr ! He's always at it, and it's a wonder  
where he puts it !

*Not.* Well now, about *Troilus and Cressida*. What do you  
play ?

*Lud.* (*struggling with his feelings*). If you'll be so obliging  
as to wait until I've got rid of this feeling of warm oil at the  
bottom of my throat, I'll tell you all about it. (*LISA gives him  
some brandy.*) Thank you, my love ; it's gone. Well, the  
piece will be produced upon a scale of unexampled magnificence.  
It is confidently predicted that my appearance as King Aga-  
memnon, in a Louis Quatorze wig, will mark an epoch in the  
theatrical annals of Pfennig Halbpennig. I endeavoured to  
persuade Ernest Dummkopf, our manager, to lend us the  
classical dresses for our marriage. Think of the effect of a real  
Athenian wedding procession cavorting through the streets of  
Speisesaal ! Torches burning—cymbals banging—flutes tootling  
—cithære twanging—and a throng of fifty lovely Spartan  
virgins capering before us, all down the High Street, singing  
"Eloia ! Eloia ! Opoponax, Eloia !" It would have been  
tremendous !

*Not.* And he declined ?

*Lud.* He did, on the prosaic ground that it might rain, and  
the ancient Greeks didn't carry umbrellas ! If, as is confidently

expected, Ernest Dummkopf is elected to succeed the dethroned one, mark my words, he will make a mess of it.

[Exit LUDWIG with LISA.]

*Olga.* He's sure to be elected. His entire company has promised to plump for him on the understanding that all the places about the Court are filled by members of his troupe, according to professional precedence.

*ERNEST enters in great excitement.*

*Bertha (looking off).* Here comes Ernest Dummkopf. Now we shall know all about it!

*All.* Well—what's the news? How is the election going?

*Ern.* Oh, it's a certainty—a practical certainty! Two of the candidates have been arrested for debt, and the third is a baby in arms—so, if you keep your promises, and vote solid, I'm cocksure of election!

*Olga.* Trust to us. But you remember the conditions?

*Ern.* Yes—all of you shall be provided for, for life. Every man shall be ennobled—every lady shall have unlimited credit at the Court Milliner's, and all salaries shall be paid weekly in advance!

*Gret.* Oh, it's quite clear he knows how to rule a Grand Duchy!

*Ern.* Rule a Grand Duchy? Why, my good girl, for ten years past I've ruled a theatrical company! A man who can do that can rule anything!

SONG.—ERNEST.

Were I a king in very truth,  
And had a son—a guileless youth—  
In probable succession;  
To teach him patience, teach him tact,  
How promptly in a fix to act,  
He should adopt, in point of fact,  
A manager's profession.  
To that condition he should stoop  
(Despite a too fond mother),  
With eight or ten "stars" in his troupe,  
All jealous of each other!

Oh, the man who can rule a theatrical crew,  
Each member a genius (and some of them two),  
And manage to humour them, little and great,  
Can govern this tuppenny State!

*All.* Oh, the man, etc.

Both A and B rehearsal slight—  
They say they'll be "all right at night"  
(They've both to go to school yet);  
C in each act *must* change her dress,

D will attempt to "square the press";  
 E won't play Romeo unless  
     His grandmother plays Juliet;  
 F claims all hoydens as her rights  
     (She's played them thirty seasons);  
 And G must show herself in tights  
     For two convincing reasons—  
     Two very well-shaped reasons!  
 Oh, the man who can drive a theatrical team,  
 With wheelers and leaders in order supreme,  
 Can govern and rule, with a wave of his fin,  
     All Europe—with Ireland thrown in!

All. Oh, the man, etc.

[*Exeunt all but ERNEST.*]

*Ern.* Elected by my fellow conspirators to be Grand Duke of Pfennig Halbpennig as soon as the contemptible little occupant of the historical throne is deposed—here is promotion indeed! Why, that instead of playing Troilus of Troy for a month, I shall play Grand Duke of Pfennig Halbpennig for a lifetime! Yet am I happy? No—far from happy! The lovely English *comédienne*—the beautiful Julia, whose dramatic ability is so overwhelming that our audiences forgive even her strong English accent—that rare and radiant being treats my respectful advances with disdain unutterable! And yet, who knows? She is haughty and ambitious, and it may be that the splendid change in my fortunes may work a corresponding change in her feelings towards me!

*Enter JULIA JELLICOE.*

*Julia.* Herr Dummkopf, a word with you, if you please.

*Ern.* Beautiful English maiden—

*Julia.* No compliments, I beg. I desire to speak with you on a purely professional matter, so we will, if you please, dispense with allusions to my personal appearance, which can only tend to widen the breach which already exists between us.

*Ern.* (*aside*). My only hope shattered! The haughty Londoner still despises me! (*Aloud*). It shall be as you will.

*Julia.* I understand that the conspiracy in which we are all concerned is to develop to-morrow, and that the company is likely to elect you to the throne on the understanding that the posts about the Court are to be filled by members of your theatrical troupe, according to their professional importance.

*Ern.* That is so.

*Julia.* Then all I can say is that it places me in an extremely awkward position.

*Ern. (very depressed).* I don't see how it concerns you.

*Julia.* Why, bless my heart, don't you see that, as your lady, I am bound under a serious penalty to play the leading part in all your productions?

*Ern.* Well?

*Julia.* Why, of course, the leading part in this production will be the Grand Duchess!

*Ern.* My wife?

*Julia.* This is another way of expressing the same idea.

*Ern. (aside—delighted).* I scarcely dared even to hope for this!

*Julia.* Of course, as your leading lady, you'll be mean enough to hold me to the terms of my agreement. Oh, that's so like a man! Well, I suppose there's no help for it—I shall have to do it.

*Ern. (aside).* She's mine! (*Aloud.*) But do you really think you would care to play that part? (*Taking her hand.*)

*Julia (withdrawing it).* Care to play it? Certainly not—but what am I to do? Business is business, and I am bound by the terms of my agreement.

*Ern.* It's for a long run, mind—a run that may last many, many years—no understudy—and once embarked upon there's no throwing it up.

*Julia.* Oh, we're used to these long runs in England: they are the curse of the stage—but, you see, I've no option.

*Ern.* You think that the part of Grand Duchess will be good enough for you?

*Julia.* Oh, I think so. It's a very good part in Gerolstein, and oughtn't to be a bad one in Pfennig Halbpfennig. Why, what did you suppose I was going to play?

*Ern. (keeping up a show of reluctance).* But, considering your strong personal dislike to me and your persistent rejection of my repeated offers, won't you find it difficult to throw yourself into the part with all the impassioned enthusiasm that the character seems to demand? Remember, it's a strongly emotional part, involving long and repeated scenes of rapture, tenderness, adoration, devotion—all in luxuriant excess, and all of the most demonstrative description.

*Julia.* My good sir, throughout my career I have made it a rule never to allow private feeling to interfere with my professional duties. You may be quite sure that (however distasteful the part may be) if I undertake it, I shall consider myself professionally bound to throw myself into it with all the ardour at my command.

*Ern. (aside—with effusion).* I'm the happiest fellow alive!

(*Aloud.*) Now—would you have any objection—to—to give me some idea—if it's only a mere sketch—as to how you play it? It would be really interesting—to me—to know your conception of—of—the part of my wife.

*Julia.* How would I play it? Now, let me see—let me see, (*Considering.*) Ah, I have it !

BALLAD.—JULIA.

How would I play this part—  
The Grand Duke's Bride?  
All rancour in my heart—  
I'd duly hide—  
I'd drive it from my recollection  
And 'whelm you with a mock affection,  
Well calculated to defy detection—  
That's how I'd play this part—  
The Grand Duke's Bride.

With many a winsome smile  
I'd witch and woo ;  
With gay and girlish guile  
I'd frenzy you—  
I'd madden you with my caressing,  
Like turtle, her first love confessing—  
That it was "mock," no mortal would be guessing,  
With so much winsome wile  
I'd witch and woo !

Did any other maid  
With you succeed,  
I'd pinch the forward jade—  
I would indeed !  
With jealous frenzy agitated  
(Which would, of course, be simulated),  
I'd make her wish she'd never been created—  
Did any other maid  
With you succeed !

And should there come to me,  
Some summers hence,  
In all the childish glee  
Of innocence,  
Fair babes, aglow with beauty vernal,  
My heart would bound with joy diurnal !  
This sweet display of sympathy maternal,  
Well, that would also be  
A mere pretence !

My histrionic art,  
Though you deride,  
That's how I'd play that part—  
The Grand Duke's Bride !

## ENSEMBLE.

ERNEST.

JULIA.

Oh joy ! when two glowing young  
hearts,

From the rise of the curtain,  
Thus throw themselves into their  
parts,

Success is most certain !  
If the rôle you're prepared to endow  
With such delicate touches,  
By the heaven above us, I vow  
You shall be my Grand  
Duchess !

My boy, when two glowing young  
hearts,

From the rise of the curtain,  
Thus throw themselves into their  
parts,

Success is most certain !  
The rôle I'm prepared to endow  
With most delicate touches,  
By the heavens above us, I vow  
I will be your Grand  
Duchess !

(Dance.)

*Enter all the Chorus with LUDWIG, NOTARY, and LISA—all greatly agitated.*

EXCITED CHORUS.

My goodness me ! what shall we do ? Why, what a dreadful  
situation !  
(to LUD.). It's all your fault, you booby you—you lump of indis-  
crimination !

I'm sure I don't know where to go—it's put me into such a  
tetter—

But this at all events I know—the sooner we are off, the better !  
*Ern.* What means this *agitato* ? What d'y'e seek ?  
As your Grand Duke elect I bid you speak !

SONG.—LUDWIG.

Ten minutes since I met a chap  
Who bowed an easy salutation—  
Thinks I, "This gentleman, mayhap,  
Belongs to our Association."

But, on the whole,

Uncertain yet,

A sausage-roll

I took and eat—

That chap replied (I don't embellish)

By eating *three* with obvious relish.

*Chorus (angrily).* Why, gracious powers,  
No chum of ours

• *Could eat three sausage-rolls with relish !*

*Lud.* Quite reassured, I let him know

Our plot—each incident explaining ;

That stranger chuckled much, as though

• He thought me highly entertaining.

I told him all,

Both bad and good ;

I bade him call—

He said he would :

I added much—the more I muddled,

The more that chuckling chummy chuckled !

*All* (*angrily*).

A bat could see

He couldn't be

A chum of ours if he chuckled!

*Lud.*

Well, as I bowed to his applause,

Down dropped he with hysteric bellow—

And *that* seemed right enough, because

I am a devilish funny fellow.

Then suddenly,

As still he squealed,

It flashed on me

That I'd revealed

Our plot, with all details effective,

To Grand Duke Rudolph's own detective!

*All.*

What folly fell,

To go and tell

Our plot to any one's detective!

CHORUS.

(*Attacking LUDWIG.*)

You booby dense—

You oaf immense,

With no pretence

To common-sense!

A stupid muff

Who's made of stuff

Not worth a puff

Of candle-snuff!

Pack up at once and off we go, unless we're anxious to exhibit  
Our fairy forms all in a row, strung up upon the Castle gibbet!

[*Exeunt Chorus. Manent LUDWIG, LISA, ERNEST, JULIA,*  
*and NOTARY.*]

*Jul.* Well, a nice mess you've got us into! There's an end  
of our precious plot! All up—pop—fizzle—bang—done for!

*Lud.* Yes, but—ha! ha!—fancy my choosing the Grand  
Duke's private detective, of all men, to make a confidant of!  
When you come to think of it, it's really devilish funny!

*Ern.* (*angrily*). When you come to think of it, it's extremely  
injudicious to admit into a conspiracy every pudding-headed  
baboon who presents himself!

*Lud.* Yes—I should never do that. If I were chairman of  
this gang, I should hesitate to enrol *any* baboon who couldn't  
produce satisfactory credentials from his last Zoological  
Gardens.

*Lisa.* Ludwig is far from being a baboon. Poor boy, he  
could not help giving us away—it's his trusting nature—he was  
deceived.

*Julia* (*furiously*). His trusting nature! (*To LUDWIG.*)  
Oh, I should like to talk to you in my own language for five  
minutes—only five minutes! I know some good, strong

energetic English remarks that would shrivel your trusting nature into raisins—only you wouldn't understand them!

*Lud.* Here we perceive one of the disadvantages of a neglected education!

*Ern.* (to JULIA). And I suppose you'll never be my Grand Duchess, now!

*Julia.* Grand Duchess? My good friend, if you don't produce the piece how can I play the part?

*Ern.* True. (To LUDWIG.) You see what you've done.

*Lud.* But, my dear sir, you don't seem to understand that the man ate three sausage-rolls. Keep that fact steadily before you. Three large sausage-rolls.

*Julia.* Bah!—Lots of people eat sausage-rolls who are not conspirators.

*Lud.* Then they shouldn't. It's bad form. It's not the game. When one of the Human Family proposes to eat a sausage-roll, it is his duty to ask himself, "Am I a conspirator?" And if, on examination, he finds that he is *not* a conspirator, he is bound in honour to select some other form of refreshment.

*Lisa.* Of course he is. One should always play the game. (To NOTARY, who has been smiling placidly through this.) What are you grinning at, you greedy old man?

*Not.* Nothing—don't mind me. It is always amusing to the legal mind to see a parcel of laymen bothering themselves about a matter which to a trained lawyer presents no difficulty whatever.

*All.* No difficulty!

*Not.* None whatever! The way out of it is quite simple.

*All.* Simple?

*Not.* Certainly! Now attend. In the first place, you two men fight a Statutory Duel.

*Ern.* A Statutory Duel?

*Julia.* A Stat-tat-tatutory Duel! Ach! what a crack-jaw language this German is!

*Lud.* Never heard of such a thing.

*Not.* It is true that the practice has fallen into abeyance through disuse. But all the laws of Pfennig Halbpennig run for a hundred years, when they die a natural death, unless, in the meantime, they have been revived for another century. The Act that institutes the Statutory Duel was passed a hundred years ago, and as it has never been revived, it expires to-morrow. So you're just in time.

*Julia.* But what is the use of talking to us about Statutory Duels when we none of us know what a Statutory Duel is?

*Not.* Don't you? Then I'll explain.



## SONG.—NOTARY.

About a century since,  
 The code of the duello  
 To sudden death  
 For want of breath  
 Sent many a strapping fellow.  
 The then presiding Prince  
 (Who useless bloodshed hated),  
 He passed an Act,  
 Short and compact,  
 Which may be briefly stated.  
 Unlike the complicated laws  
 A Parliamentary draughtsman draws,  
 It may be briefly stated.

*All.* We know that complicated laws,  
 Such as a legal draughtsman draws,  
 Cannot be briefly stated.

*Not.* By this ingenious law,  
 If any two shall quarrel,  
 They may not fight  
 With falchions bright  
 (Which seemed to him immoral);  
 But each a card shall draw,  
 And he who draws the lowest  
 Shall (so 'twas said)—  
 Be thenceforth dead—  
 In fact, a legal "ghost"  
 (When exigence of rhyme compels,  
 Orthography foregoes her spells,  
 And "ghost" is written "ghost.")

*All (aside).* With what an emphasis he dwells  
 Upon "orthography" and "spells"!  
 That kind of fun's the lowest.

*Not.* When off the loser's popped  
 (By little legal fiction),  
 And friend and foe  
 Have wept their woe  
 In counterfeit affliction,  
 The winner must adopt  
 The loser's poor relations—  
 Discharge his debts,  
 Pay all his bets,  
 And take his obligations.  
 In short, to briefly sum the case,  
 The winner takes the loser's place,  
 With all its obligations.

*All.* How neatly lawyers state a case!  
 The winner takes the loser's place,  
 With all its obligations!

*Lud.* I see. The man who draws the lowest card—

*Not.* Dies, *ipso facto*, a social death. He loses all his civil rights—his identity disappears—the Revising Barrister expunges his name from the list of voters, and the winner takes his place, whatever it may be, discharges all his functions and adopts all his responsibilities.

*Ern.* This is all very well, as far as it goes, but it only protects one of us. What's to become of the survivor?

*Lud.* Yes, that's an interesting point, because *I* might be the survivor.

*Not.* The survivor goes at once to the Grand Duke, and, in a burst of remorse, denounces the dead man as the moving spirit of the plot. He is accepted as King's evidence, and, as a matter of course, receives a free pardon. To-morrow, when the law expires, the dead man will, *ipso facto*, come to life again—the Revising Barrister will restore his name to the list of voters, and he will resume all his obligations as though nothing unusual had happened.

*Julia.* When he will be at once arrested, tried, and executed on the evidence of the informer! Candidly, my friend, I don't think much of your plot!

*Not.* Dear, dear, dear, the ignorance of the laity! My good young lady, it is a beautiful maxim of our glorious Constitution that a man can only die once. Death expunges crime, and when he comes to life again, it will be with a clean slate.

*Ern.* It's really very ingenious.

*Lud.* (to NOTARY). My dear sir, we owe you our lives!

*Lisa* (aside to LUDWIG). May I kiss him?

*Lud.* Certainly not: you're a big girl now. (To ERNEST.) Well, miscreant, are you prepared to meet me on the field of honour?

*Ern.* At once. By Jove, what a couple of fire-eaters we are!

*Lisa.* Ludwig doesn't know what fear is.

*Lud.* Oh, I don't mind this sort of duel!

*Ern.* It's not a duel with swords. I hate a duel with swords. It's not the blade I mind—it's the blood.

*Lud.* And I hate a duel with pistols. It's not the ball I mind—it's the bang.

*Not.* Altogether it is a great improvement on the old method. of giving satisfaction.

QUINTET.—LUDWIG, LISA, NOTARY, ERNEST, JULIA.

Strange the views some people hold!

Two young fellows quarrel—

Then they fight, for both are bold—

Rage of both is uncontrolled—

Both are stretched out, stark and cold !

Prithee where's the moral ?

Ding dong ! Ding dong !

There's an end to further action,

And this barbarous transaction

Is described as "satisfaction" !

Ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! satisfaction !

Ding dong ! Ding dong !

Each is laid in churchyard mould—

Strange the views some people hold !

Better than the method old,

Which was coarse and cruel,

Is the plan that we've extolled.

Sing thy virtues manifold

(Better than refined gold),

Statutory Duel !

Sing song ! Sing song !

Sword or pistol neither uses—

Playing card he lightly chooses,

And the loser simply loses.

Ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! simply loses.

Sing song ! Sing song !

Some prefer the churchyard mould !

Strange the views some people hold !

*Not. (offering a card to ERNEST).* Now take a card and gaily sing  
How little you care for Fortune's rubs—

*Ern. (drawing a card).* Hurrah, hurrah !—I've drawn a King !

*All.* He's drawn a King !

He's drawn a King !

Sing Hearts and Diamonds, Spades and Clubs !

*All (dancing).* He's drawn a King !

How strange a thing !

An excellent card—his chance it aids—

Sing Hearts and Diamonds, Spades and Clubs—

Sing Diamonds, Hearts and Clubs and Spades !

*Not. (to LUDWIG).* Now take a card with heart of grace—  
(Whatever our fate, let's play our parts).

*Lud. (drawing card).* Hurrah, hurrah !—I've drawn an Ace !

*All.* He's drawn an Ace !

He's drawn an Ace !

Sing Clubs and Diamonds, Spades and Hearts !

*All (dancing).* He's drawn an Ace !

Observe his face—

Such very good fortune falls to few—

Sing Clubs and Diamonds, Spades and Hearts—

Sing Clubs, Spades, Hearts and Diamonds too !

*Not.* That both these maids may keep their troth,  
And never misfortune them befall,  
I'll hold 'em as trustee for both—

*All.* He'll hold 'em both !  
He'll hold 'em both !  
Sing Hearts, Clubs, Diamonds, Spades and all !

*All (dancing).* By joint decree  
As { our } trustee  
This Notary { we } will now instal—  
In custody let him keep { their } hearts,  
Sing Hearts, Clubs, Diamonds, Spades and all !

[*Dance and Exeunt*—LUDWIG, ERNEST, and NOTARY  
off with the two Girls.

*March.* Enter the seven Chamberlains of the GRAND DUKE  
RUDOLPH.

CHORUS OF CHAMBERLAINS.

The good Grand Duke of Pfennig Halbpfennig,  
Though, in his own opinion, very very big,  
In point of fact he's nothing but a miserable prig  
Is the good Grand Duke of Pfennig Halbpfennig !  
Though quite contemptible, as every one agrees,  
We must dissemble if we want our bread and cheese,  
So hail him in a chorus, with enthusiasm big,  
The good Grand Duke of Pfennig Halbpfennig !

*Enter the GRAND DUKE RUDOLPH.* He is meanly and miserably  
dressed in old and patched clothes, but blazes with a pro-  
fusion of orders and decorations. He is very weak and ill,  
from low living.

SONG.—RUDOLPH.

A pattern to professors of monarchical autonomy,  
I don't indulge in levity or compromising *bonhomie*,  
But dignified formality, consistent with economy,  
Above all other virtues I particularly prize.  
I never join in merriment—I don't see joke or jape any—  
I never tolerate familiarity in shape any—  
This, joined with an extravagant respect for tuppence ha'penny,  
A keynote to my character sufficiently supplies.

(*Speaking.*) Observe. (*To Chamberlains.*) My snuff-box !  
[*The snuff-box is passed with much ceremony from the  
Junior Chamberlain, through all the others, until it is  
presented by the Senior Chamberlain to RUDOLPH, who  
uses it.*

*All.* That incident a keynote to my character supplies.  
That incident, etc.

*Rud.* I weigh out tea and sugar with precision mathematical—  
 Instead of beer, a penny each—my orders are emphatical—  
 (Extravagance unpardonable, any more than that I call),  
 But, on the other hand, my Ducal dignity to keep—  
 All Courtly ceremonial—to put it comprehensively—  
 I rigidly insist upon (but not, I hope, offensively)  
 Whenever ceremonial can be practised inexpensively—  
 And when you come to think of it, it's really very cheap!

(*Speaking.*) Observe. (*To Chamberlains.*) My handkerchief!  
*[Handkerchief is handed by Junior Chamberlain to the  
 next in order, and so on until it reaches RUDOLPH, who  
 is much inconvenienced by the delay.]*

*All.* It's sometimes inconvenient, but it's always very cheap!  
 It's stately and impressive, etc.

*Rud.* My Lord Chamberlain, as you are aware, my marriage with the wealthy Baroness von Krakenfeldt will take place to-morrow, and you will be good enough to see that the rejoicings are on a scale of unusual liberality. Pass that on. (*Chamberlain whispers to the Vice-Chamberlain, who whispers to the next, and so on.*) The sports will begin with a Wedding Breakfast Bee. The leading pastrycooks of the town will be invited to compete, and the winner will not only enjoy the satisfaction of seeing his breakfast devoured by the Grand Ducal pair, but he will also be entitled to have the Arms of Pfennig Halbpennig tattoo'd between his shoulder-blades. The Vice-Chamberlain will see to this. All the public fountains of Speisesaal will run with Gingerbierheim and Currantweinsmilch at the public expense. The Assistant Vice-Chamberlain will see to this. At night, everybody will illuminate; and as I have no desire to tax the public funds unduly, this will be done at the inhabitants' private expense. The Deputy Assistant Vice-Chamberlain will see to this. All my Grand Ducal subjects will wear new clothes, and the Sub-Deputy Assistant Vice-Chamberlain will collect the usual commission on all sales. Wedding presents (which, on this occasion, should be on a scale of extraordinary magnificence) will be received at the Palace at any hour of the twenty-four, and the Temporary Sub-Deputy Assistant Vice-Chamberlain will sit up all night for this purpose. The entire population will be commanded to enjoy themselves, and with this view the Acting-Temporary Sub-Deputy Assistant Vice-Chamberlain will sing comic songs in the Market Place from noon to nightfall. Finally, we have composed a Wedding Anthem, with which the entire population are required to provide themselves. It can be obtained from our Grand Ducal publishers at the usual discount price, and all the Chamberlains

will be expected to push the sale. (*Chamberlains bow and exeunt.*) I don't feel at all comfortable. I hope I'm not doing a foolish thing in getting married. After all, it's a poor heart that never rejoices, and this wedding of mine is the first little treat I've allowed myself since my christening. Besides, Caroline's income is very considerable, and as her ideas of economy are quite on a par with mine, it ought to turn out well. Bless her tough old heart, she's a mean little darling! Oh, here she is, punctual to her appointment!

*Enter BARONESS VON KRAKENFELDT.*

*Bar.* Rudolph! Why, what's the matter?

*Rud.* Why, I'm not quite myself, my pet. I'm a little worried and upset. I want a tonic. It's the low diet, I think. I am afraid, after all, I shall have to take the bull by the horns and have an egg with my breakfast.

*Bar.* I shouldn't do anything rash, my dear. Begin with a ju-jube. [*Gives him one.*]

*Rud.* (*about to eat it, but changes his mind.*) I'll keep it for supper.

[*He sits by her and tries to put his arm round her waist.*]

*Bar.* Rudolph, don't! What in the world are you thinking of?

*Rud.* I was thinking of embracing you, my sugarplum. Just as a little cheap treat.

*Bar.* What here? In public? Really you appear to have no sense of delicacy.

*Rud.* No sense of delicacy, Bon-bon!

*Bar.* No. I can't make you out. When you courted me, all your courting was done publicly in the Market Place. When you proposed to me, you proposed in the Market Place. And now that we're engaged you seem to desire that our first *tête-à-tête* shall occur in the Market Place! Surely you've a room in your Palace—with blinds—that would do?

*Rud.* But, my own, I can't help myself. I'm bound by my own decree.

*Bar.* Your own decree?

*Rud.* Yes. You see, all the houses that give on the Market Place belong to me, but the drains (which date back to the reign of Charlemagne) want attending to, and the houses wouldn't let—so with a view to increasing the value of the property, I decreed that all love episodes between affectionate couples should take place, in public on this spot, every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, when the band doesn't play.

*Bar.* Bless me, what a happy idea! So moral too! And have you found it answer?

*Rud.* Answer? The rents have gone up fifty per cent., and the sale of opera glasses (which is a Grand Ducal monopoly) has received an extraordinary stimulus! So, under the circumstances, *would* you allow me to put my arm round your waist? As a source of income. Just once!

*Bar.* But it's so very embarrassing. Think of the opera glasses!

*Rud.* My good girl, that's just what I *am* thinking of. Hang it all, we must give them *something* for their money! What's that?

*Bar.* (*unfolding paper, which contains a large letter, which she hands to him*). It's a letter which your detective asked me to hand to you. I wrapped it up in yesterday's paper to keep it clean.

*Rud.* Oh, it's only his report! That'll keep. But, I say, you've never been and bought a newspaper?

*Bar.* My dear Rudolph, do you think I'm mad? It came wrapped round my breakfast.

*Rud.* (*relieved*). I thought you were not the sort of girl to go and buy a newspaper! Well, as we've got it, we may as well read it. What does it say?

*Bar.* Why—dear me—here's your biography! "Our Detested Despot!"

*Rud.* Yes—I fancy that refers to me.

*Bar.* And it says—Oh, it can't be!

*Rud.* What can't be?

*Bar.* Why, it says that although you're going to marry me to-morrow, you were betrothed in infancy to the Princess of Monte Carlo!

*Rud.* Oh yes—that's quite right. Didn't I mention it?

*Bar.* Mention it! You never said a word about it!

*Rud.* Well, it doesn't matter, because, you see, it's practically off?

*Bar.* Practically off.

*Rud.* Yes. By the terms of the contract the betrothal is void unless the Princess marries before she is of age. Now, her father, the Prince, is stony-broke, and hasn't left his house for years for fear of arrest. Over and over again he has implored me to come to him to be married, but in vain. Over and over again he has implored me to advance him the money to enable the Princess to come to me, but in vain. I am very young, but not as young as that; and the Princess comes of age at two to-morrow, why at two to-morrow I'm a free man, so that I

appointed that hour for our wedding, as I shall like to have as much marriage as I can get for my money.

*Bar.* I see. Of course, if the married state is a happy state, it's a pity to waste any of it.

*Rud.* Why, every hour we delayed I should lose a lot of you and you'd lose a lot of me!

*Bar.* My thoughtful darling! Oh, Rudolph, we ought to be very happy!

*Rud.* If I'm not, it'll be my first bad investment. Still, there is such a thing as a slump even in Matrimonials.

*Bar.* I often picture us in the long, cold, dark, December evenings, sitting close to each other and singing impassioned duets to keep us warm, and thinking of all the lovely things we could afford to buy if we chose, and, at the same time, planning out our lives in a spirit of the most rigid and exacting economy!

*Rud.* It's a most beautiful and touching picture of connubial bliss in its highest and most rarified development!

DUET.—BARONESS and RUDOLPH.

*Bar.* As o'er our penny roll we sing,  
It is not reprehensive  
To think what joys our wealth would bring  
Were we disposed to do the thing  
Upon a scale extensive.  
There's rich mock-turtle—thick and clear—

*Rud. (confidentially).* Perhaps we'll have it once a year!

*Bar. (delighted).* You are an open-handed dear!

*Rud.* Though, mind you, it's expensive.

*Bar.* No doubt it is expensive.

*Both.* Oh, he who has an income clear  
Of fifty thousand pounds a year  
Can purchase all his fancy loves—

*Bar.* Conspicuous hats—

*Rud.* Two-shilling gloves—

*Bar. (doubtfully).* Two-shilling gloves?

*Rud. (positively).* Two-shilling gloves—

*Both.* Cheap shoes and ties of gaudy hue,  
And Waterbury watches, too—  
And think that he could buy the lot  
Were he a donkey—

*Rud.* Which he's not!

*Bar.* Oh no, he's not!

*Rud.* Oh no, he's not!

*Both.* That kind of donkey he's not!



(Dancing.) Then let us be modestly merry,  
 And rejoice with a derry down derry.  
 For to laugh and to sing  
 Is a rational thing—  
 It's a joy economical, very !

[Exit BARONESS.]

*Rud.* Oh, now for my detective's report. (*Opens letter.*) What's this ! Another conspiracy ! A conspiracy to depose me ! And my private detective was so convulsed with laughter at the notion of a conspirator selecting him for a confidant that he was physically unable to arrest the malefactor ! Why, it'll come off ! This comes of engaging a detective with a keen sense of the ridiculous ! For the future I'll employ none but Scotchmen. And the plot is to explode to-morrow ! My wedding day ! Oh, Caroline, Caroline ! (*Weeps.*) This is perfectly frightful ! What's to be done ? I don't know ! I ought to keep cool and think, but you *can't* think when your veins are full of hot soda water, and your brain's fizzing like a firework, and all your faculties are jumbled in a perfect whirlpool of tumblication ! And I'm going to be ill ! I know I am ! I've been living too low, and I'm going to be very ill indeed !

SONG.—RUDOLPH.

When you find you're a broken-down critter,  
 Who is all of a trimmle and twitter,  
 With your palate unpleasantly bitter,  
 As if you'd just eaten a pill—  
 When your legs are as thin as dividers,  
 And you're plagued with unruly insiders,  
 And your spine is all creepy with spiders,  
 And you're highly gamboge in the gill—  
 When you've got a beehive in your head,  
 And a sewing machine in each ear,  
 And you feel that you've eaten your bed,  
 And you've got a bad headache *down here*—  
 When such facts are about,  
 And these symptoms you find  
 In your body or crown—  
 Well, you'd better look out,  
 You may make up your mind  
 You had better lie down !

When your lips are all smeary—like tallow,  
 And your tongue is decidedly yallow,  
 With a pint of warm oil in your swallow,  
 And a pound of tin-tacks in your chest—  
 When you're down in the mouth with the vapours,  
 And all over your new Morris papers  
 Black-beetles are cutting their capers,  
 And crawly things never at rest—

When you doubt if your head is your own,  
 And you jump when an open door slams—  
 Then you've got to a state which is known  
 To the medical world as "jim-jams."  
 If such symptoms you find  
 In your body or head,  
 They're not easy to quell—  
 You may make up your mind  
 You are better in bed,  
 For you're not at all well!

[*Sinks exhausted and weeping at foot of well.*]

*Enter LUDWIG.*

*Lud.* Now for my confession and full pardon. They told me the Grand Duke was dancing duets in the Market Place, but I don't see him. (*Sees RUDOLPH.*) Hallo! Who's this? (*Aside.*) Why, it is the Grand Duke!

*Rud. (sobbing).* Who are you, sir, who presumes to address me in person? If you've anything to communicate, you must fling yourself at the feet of my Acting Temporary Sub-Deputy Assistant Vice-Chamberlain, who will fling himself at the feet of his immediate superior, and so on, with successive foot-flings through the various grades—your communication will, in course of time, come to my august knowledge.

*Lud.* But when I inform your Highness that in me you see the most unhappy, the most unfortunate, the most completely miserable man in your whole dominion—

*Rud. (still sobbing).* You the most miserable man in my whole dominion? How can you have the face to stand there and say such a thing? Why, look at me! Look at me! (*Bursts into tears.*)

*Lud.* Well, I wouldn't be a cry-baby.

*Rud.* A cry-baby? If you had been told that you were going to be deposed to-morrow, and perhaps blown up with dynamite for all I know, wouldn't *you* be a cry-baby? I do declare if I could only hit upon some cheap and painless method of putting an end to an existence which has become unsupportable, I would unhesitatingly adopt it!

*Lud.* You would? (*Aside.*) I see a magnificent way out of this! By Jupiter, I'll try it! (*Aloud.*) Are you, by any chance, in earnest?

*Rud.* In earnest? Why, look at me!

*Lud.* If you are really in earnest—if you really desire to escape scot free from this impending—this unspeakably horrible catastrophe—without trouble, danger, pain, or expense—why not resort to a Statutory Duel?

*Rud.* A Statutory Duel?

*Lud.* Yes. The Act is still in force, but it will expire to-morrow afternoon. You fight—you lose—you are dead for a day. To-morrow, when the Act expires, you will come to life again and resume your Grand Duchy as though nothing had happened. In the meantime, the explosion will have taken place and the survivor will have had to bear the brunt of it.

*Rud.* Yes, that's all very well, but who'll be fool enough to be the survivor?

*Lud.* (*kneeling*). Actuated by an overwhelming sense of attachment to your Grand Ducal person, I unhesitatingly offer myself as the victim of your subjects' fury.

*Rud.* You do? Well, really that's very handsome. I daresay being blown up is not nearly as unpleasant as one would think.

*Lud.* Oh yes, it is. It mixes one up, awfully!

*Rud.* But suppose I were to lose?

*Lud.* Oh, that's easily arranged. (*Producing cards.*) I'll put an Ace up my sleeve—you'll put a King up yours. When the drawing takes place, I shall seem to draw the higher card and you the lower. And there you are!

*Rud.* Oh, but that's cheating.

*Lud.* So it is. I never thought of that. (*Going.*)

*Rud.* (*hastily*). Not that I mind. But I say—you won't take an unfair advantage of your day of office? You won't go tipping people, or squandering my little savings in fireworks, or any nonsense of that sort?

*Lud.* I am hurt—really hurt—by the suggestion.

*Rud.* You—you wouldn't like to put down a deposit, perhaps?

*Lud.* No. I don't think I should like to put down a deposit.

*Rud.* Or give a guarantee?

*Lud.* A guarantee would be equally open to objection.

*Rud.* It would be more regular. Very well, I suppose you must have your own way.

*Lud.* Good. I say—we must have a devil of a quarrel!

*Rud.* Oh, a devil of a quarrel!

*Lud.* Just to give colour to the thing. Shall I give you a sound thrashing before all the people? Say the word—it's no trouble.

*Rud.* No, I think not, though it would be very convincing and it's extremely good and thoughtful of you to suggest it. Still, a devil of a quarrel!

*Lud.* Oh, a devil of a quarrel!

*Rud.* No half measures. Big words—strong language—rude remarks. Oh, a devil of a quarrel!

*Lud.* Now the question is, how shall we summon the people?

*Rud.* Oh, there's no difficulty about that. Bless your heart, they've been staring at us through those windows for the last half hour!

FINALE.

*Rud.* Come hither, all you people—  
When you hear the fearful news,  
All the pretty women weep'll,  
Men will shiver in their shoes.

*Lud.* And they'll all cry "Lord, defend us!"  
When they learn the fact tremendous  
That to give this man his gruel  
In a Statutory Duel—

*Both.* This plebeian man of shoddy—  
This contemptible nobody—  
Your Grand Duke does not refuse!

[During this, Chorus of men and women have entered, all trembling with apprehension under the impression that they are to be arrested for their complicity in the conspiracy.]

CHORUS.

With faltering feet,  
And our muscles in a quiver,  
Our fate we meet  
With our feelings all unstrung!  
If our plot complete  
He has managed to diskiver,  
There is no retreat—  
We shall certainly be hung!

*Rud.* (*aside to LUDWIG*).

Now you begin and pitch it strong—walk into me abusively—

*Lud.* (*aside to RUDOLPH*).

I've several epithets that I've reserved for you exclusively.

A choice selection I have here when you are ready to begin.

*Rud.* Now you begin—

*Lud.* No, you begin—

*Rud.* No, you begin—

*Lud.* No, you begin!

*Chorus* (*trembling*). Has it happened as we expected?  
Is our little plot detected?

DUET.—RUDOLPH and LUDWIG.

*Rud.* (*furiously*).

Big bombs, small bombs, great guns and little ones!

Put him in a pillory!

Rack him with artillery!

*Lud.* (*furiously*).

Long swords, short swords, tough swords and brittle ones!

Fright him into fits!

Blow him into bits!

Rud. You muff, sir!  
 You lout, sir!  
 Lud. Enough, sir!  
 Get out, sir! (*Pushes him.*)  
 Rud. A hit, sir?  
 Take that, sir! (*Slaps him.*)

Lud. (*slapping RUDOLPH.*)

It's tit, sir,  
 For tat, sir!

Chorus (*appalled*). When two doughty heroes thunder,  
 All the world is lost in wonder;  
 When such men their temper lose,  
 Awful are the words they use!

Lud. Tall snobs, small snobs, rich snobs and needy ones!

Rud. (*jostling him*). Whom are you alluding to?

Lud. (*jostling him*). Where are you intruding to?

Rud. Fat snobs, thin snobs, swell snobs and seedy ones!

Lud. I rather think you err.  
 To whom do you refer?

Rud. To you, sir!

Lud. To me, sir?

Rud. I do, sir!

Lud. We'll see, sir!

Rud. I jeer, sir!

(*makes a face at LUDWIG*). Grimace, sir!

Lud. Look here, sir—

(*makes a face at RUDOLPH*). A face, sir!

Chorus (*appalled*). When two heroes, once pacific,  
 Quarrel, the effect's terrific!  
 What a horrible grimace!  
 What a paralyzing face!

All. Big bombs, small bombs, etc.

Lud. and Rud. (*recit.*). He has insulted me, and, in a breath,  
 This day we fight a duel to the death!

Not. (*checking them*). You mean, of course, by duel (*verbum sat.*),  
 A Statutory Duel.

All. Why, what's that?

Not. According to established legal uses,  
 A card a-piece each bold disputant chooses—  
 Dead as a doornail is the dog who loses—  
 The winner steps into the dead man's shoeses!  
 All. The winner steps into the dead man's shoeses!

Rud. and Lud. Agreed! Agreed!

Rud. Come, come—the pack!

Not. (*producing one*). Behold it here!

Rud. I'm on the rack!

Lud. I quake with fear!

(*NOTARY offers card to LUDWIG.*)

Lud. First draw to you!

Rud. If that's the case,

Behold the King! (*Drawing card from his sleeve.*)

Lud. (*same business*): Behold the Ace!

- Chorus.* Hurrah, hurrah! Our Ludwig's won,  
And wicked Rudolph's course is run—  
So Ludwig will as Grand Duke reign  
Till Rudolph comes to life again—
- Rud. (aside).* Which will occur to-morrow!  
I come to life to-morrow!
- Gret. (with mocking curtsey).*  
My Lord Grand Duke, farewell!  
A pleasant journey, very,  
To your convenient cell  
In yonder cemetery!
- Lisa (curtseying).* Though malcontents abuse you,  
We're much distressed to lose you!  
You were, when you were living,  
So liberal, so forgiving!
- Bertha.* So merciful, so gentle!  
So highly ornamental!
- Olga.* And now that you've departed,  
You leave us broken-hearted!
- All (pretending to weep).* Yes, truly, truly, truly, truly—  
Truly broken-hearted!  
Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! (*Mocking him.*)
- Rud. (furious).* Rapsallions, in penitential fires,  
You'll rue the ribaldry that from you falls!  
To-morrow afternoon the law expires,  
And then—look out for squalls!  
[Exit RUDOLPH amid general ridicule.]
- Chorus.* Give thanks, give thanks to wayward fate—  
By mystic fortune's sway,  
Our Ludwig guides the helm of State  
For one delightful day!
- (To LUDWIG.) We hail you, sir!  
We greet you, sir!  
Regale you, sir!  
We treat you, sir!  
Our ruler be  
By fate's decrees  
For one delightful day!
- Not.* You've done it neatly! Pity that your powers  
Are limited to four-and-twenty hours!
- Lud.* No matter, though the time will quickly run,  
In hours twenty-four much may be done!

## SONG.—LUDWIG.

Oh, a Monarch who boasts intellectual graces  
Can do, if he likes, a good deal in a day—  
He can put all his friends in conspicuous places,  
With plenty to eat and with nothing to pay!  
You'll tell me, no doubt, with unpleasant grimaces,  
To-morrow, deprived of your ribbons and laces,  
You'll get your dismissal—with very long faces—  
But wait! on that topic I've something to say!

(Dancing.) I've something to say—I've something to say—I've something to say!

Oh, our rule shall be merry—I'm not an ascetic—  
And while the sun shines we will get up our hay—  
By a pushing young Monarch, of turn energetic,  
A very great deal may be done in a day!

Chorus. Oh, his rule will be merry, etc.

[During this LUDWIG whispers to NOTARY who writes.  
For instance, this measure (his ancestor drew it),  
[alluding to NOTARY.

This law against duels—to-morrow will die—  
The Duke will revive, and you'll certainly rue it—  
He'll give you "what for" and he'll let you know why!  
In twenty-four hours there's time to renew it—  
With century's life I've the right to imbue it—  
It's easy to do—and, by Jingo, I'll do it!

[Signing paper, which NOTARY presents.

It's done! Till I perish your Monarch am I!  
Your Monarch am I—your Monarch am I—your Monarch  
am I!

Though I do not pretend to be very prophetic,  
I fancy I know what you're going to say—  
By a pushing young Monarch, of turn energetic,  
A very great deal may be done in a day!

All (astonished). Oh, it's simply uncanny, his power prophetic—  
It's perfectly right—we were going to say.  
By a pushing, etc.

Enter JULIA, at back.

Lud. (recit.). This very afternoon—at two (about)—  
The Court appointments will be given out.  
To each and all (for that was the condition)  
According to professional position!

All. Hurrah!

Julia (coming forward). According to professional position?

Lud. According to professional position!

Julia. Then, horror!

All. Why, what's the matter? What's the matter? What's  
the matter?

SONG.—JULIA. (LISA clinging to her.)

Ah, pity me, my comrades true,  
Who love me, as well I know you do,  
This gentle child,  
To me so fondly dear!

All. Why, what's the matter?

Julia. Each sympathetic heart 'twill brieve  
When you have learnt the frightful news—  
Her love for him is all in all!  
Ah, cursed fate! that it should fall  
Unto my lot  
To break my darling's heart!

*All.* Why, what's the matter?  
*Lud.* What means our Julia by those fateful looks?  
 Please do not keep us all on tenter-hooks—

*Julia.* Now, what's the matter?  
 Our duty, if we're wise,  
 We never shun.  
 This Spartan rule applies  
 To every one.  
 In theatre, as in life,  
 Each has her line—  
 This part—the Grand Duke's wife  
 (Oh woe!) is mine!  
 A maxim new I do not start—  
 The canons of dramatic art  
 Decree that this repulsive part  
 (The Grand Duke's wife)  
 Is mine!

*All.* Oh, *that's* the matter!

*Lisa* (appalled, to LUDWIG). Can that be so?

*Lud.* I do not know—  
 But time will show  
 If that be so.

*Chorus.* Can that be so? etc.

*Lisa* (recit.). Be merciful!

DUET.—LISA and JULIA.

*Lisa.* Oh, listen to me, dear—  
 I love him only, darling!  
 Remember, oh, my pet,  
 On him my heart is set!  
 This kindness do me, dear—  
 Nor leave me lonely, darling!  
 Be merciful, my pet,  
 Our love do not forget!

*Julia.* Now don't be foolish, dear—  
 You couldn't play it, darling!  
 It's "leading business," pet,  
 And you're but a soubrette.  
 So don't be mulish, dear—  
 Although I say it, darling,  
 It's not you're line, my pet—  
 I play that part, you bet!  
 I play that part—  
 I play that part, you bet!

[LISA overwhelmed with grief.

*Not.* The lady's right. Though Julia's engagement  
 Was for the stage meant—  
 It certainly frees Ludwig from his  
 Connubial promise.  
 Though marriage contracts—or whate'er you call 'em—  
 Are very solemn,



Dramatic contracts (which you all adore so)  
Are even more so !

*All.* That's very true !  
Though marriage contracts, etc.

SONG.—LISA.

The die is cast,  
My hope has perished !  
Farewell, O Past,  
Too bright to last,  
Yet fondly cherished !  
My light has fled,  
My hope is dead,  
Its doom is spoken—  
My day is night,  
My wrong is right  
In all men's sight—  
My heart is broken !

[*Exit, weeping.*]

*Lud. (recit.).* Poor child, where will she go ? What will she do ?

*Julia.* That isn't in your part, you know.

*Lud. (sighing).* Quite true !

(*With an effort.*) Depressing topics we'll not touch upon—

Let us begin as we are going on !

For this will be a jolly court, for little and for big !

*All.* Sing hey, the jolly jinks of Pfennig Halbpennig !

*Lud.* From morn to night our lives shall be as merry as a grig !

*All.* Sing hey, the jolly jinks of Pfennig Halbpennig !

*Lud.* All state and ceremony we'll eternally abolish—

We don't mean to insist upon unnecessary polish—

And, on the whole, I rather think you'll find our rule tolerish !

*All.* Sing hey, the jolly jinks of Pfennig Halbpennig !

*Julia.* But stay—your new-made Court

Without a courtly coat is—

We shall require

Some Court attire,

And at a moment's notice.

In clothes of common sort

Your courtiers must not grovel—

Your new *noblesse*

Must have a dress

Original and novel !

*Lud.* Old Athens we'll exhume !

The necessary dresses,

Correct and true

And all brand new

The company possesses :

Henceforth our Court costume

Shall live in song and story,

For we'll upraise

The dead old days

Of Athens in her glory !

*All.* Yes, let's upraise  
The dead old days  
Of Athens in her glory!  
*All.* Agreed! Agreed!  
For this will be a jolly Court for little and for big! etc.  
[*They carry LUDWIG round stage and deposit him on the ironwork of well. JULIA stands by him, and the rest group round them.*

ACT DROP.

## ACT II.

(THE NEXT MORNING.)

SCENE.—*Entrance Hall of the Grand Ducal Palace.*

*Enter a procession of the members of the theatrical company (now dressed in the costumes of Troilus and Cressida), carrying garlands, playing on pipes, citharæ, and cymbals, and heralding the return of LUDWIG and JULIA from the marriage ceremony, which has just taken place.*

CHORUS.

As before you we defile,  
Eloia! Eloia!  
Pray you, gentles, do not smile  
If we shout, in classic style,  
Eloia!  
Ludwig and his Julia true  
Wedded are each other to—  
So we sing, till all is blue,  
Eloia! Eloia!  
Opoanax! Eloia!  
Wreaths of bay and ivy twine,  
Eloia! Eloia!  
Fill the bowl with Lesbian wine,  
And to revelry incline—  
Eloia!  
For as gaily we pass on  
Probably we shall, anon,  
Sing a Diergeticon—  
Eloia! Eloia!  
Opoanax! Eloia!

REKIT.—LUDWIG.

Your loyalty our Ducal heartstrings touches:  
Allow me to present your new Grand Duchess.  
Should she offend, you'll graciously excuse her—  
And kindly recollect I didn't choose her!

## SONG.—LUDWIG.

At the outset I may mention it's my sovereign intention  
 To revive the classic memories of Athens at its best,  
 For the company possesses all the necessary dresses  
 And a course of quiet cramming will supply us with the rest.  
 We've a choir hyporchematic (that is, ballet-operatic)  
 Who respond to the *choreuta* of that cultivated age,  
 And our clever chorus-master, all but captions criticaster,  
 Would accept as the *choregus* of the early Attic stage.  
 This return to classic ages is considered in their wages,  
 Which are always calculated by the day or by the week—  
 And I'll pay 'em (if they'll back me) all in *oboloi* and *drachmæ*,  
 Which they'll get (if they prefer it) at the Kalends that are Greek !  
 (*Confidentially to audience.*)

At this juncture I may mention  
 That this erudition sham  
 Is but classical pretension,  
 The result of steady "cram." :  
 Periphrastic methods spurning,  
 To this audience discerning  
 I admit this show of learning  
 Is the fruit of steady "cram." !

*Chorus.*

Periphrastic methods, etc.

In the period Socratic every dining-room was Attic  
 (Which suggests an architecture of a topsy-turvy kind),  
 There they'd satisfy their thirst on a *recherche* cold *ἄριστον*  
 Which is what they called their lunch—and so may you, if you're  
 inclined.  
 As they gradually got on, they'd *τρέπεσθαι πρὸς τὸν πότον*  
 (Which is Attic for a steady and a conscientious drink).  
 But they mixed their wine with water—which I'm sure they didn't  
 oughter—

And we modern Saxons know a trick worth two of that, I think !  
 Then came rather risky dances (under certain circumstances)  
 Which would shock that worthy gentleman, the Licensor of Plays,  
 Corybantian maniac kick—Dionysiac or Bacchic—  
 And the Dithyrambic revels of those undecorous days.

(*Confidentially to audience.*)

And perhaps I'd better mention,  
 Lest alarming you I am,  
 That it isn't our intention  
 To perform a Dithyramb—  
 It displays a lot of stocking,  
 Which is always very shocking,  
 And of course I'm only mocking  
 At the prevalence of "cram."

*Chorus.*

It displays a lot, etc.

Yes, on reconsideration, there are customs of that nation  
 Which are not in strict accordance with the habits of our day,  
 And when I come to codify, their rules I mean to modify,  
 Or Mrs. Grundy, p'r'aps, may have a word or two to say.

For they hadn't macintoshes or umbrellas or goloshes—

And a shower with their dresses must have played the very deuce,  
And it must have been unpleasing when they caught a fit of sneezing,

For, it seems, of pocket-handkerchiefs they didn't know the use.

They wore little underclothing—scarcely anything—or no-thing—

And their dress of Coan silk was quite transparent in design—  
Well, in fact, in summer weather, something like the "altogether."

And it's *there*, I rather fancy, I shall have to draw the line!

(*Confidentially to audience.*)

And again I wish to mention .

That this erudition *pham*

Is but classical pretension,

The result of steady "cram."

You may classic love aggressive

(If you'll pardon the possessive)

Is exceeding impressive

When you're passing an exam.

*Chorus.* Yet his classic love, etc.

[*Exeunt Chorus. Manent* LUDWIG, JULIA, and LISA.

*Lud. (recit.)*. Yes, Ludwig and his Julia are mated!

For when an obscure comedian, whom the law backs,

To sovereign rank is promptly elevated,

He takes it with its incidental drawbacks!

So Julia and I are duly mated!

[*LISA, through this, has expressed intense distress at  
having to surrender* LUDWIG.

SONG.—LISA,

Take care of him—he's much too good to live,

With him you must be very gentle:

Poor fellow, he's so highly sensitive,

And O, so sentimental!

Be sure you never let him sit up late

In chilly open air conversing—

Poor darling, he's extremely delicate,

And wants a deal of nursing!

*Lud.* I want a deal of nursing!

*Lisa.* And O, remember this—

When he is cross with pain,

A flower and a kiss—

A simple flower—a tender kiss!

Will bring him round again!

His moods you must assiduously watch:

When he succumbs to sorrow tragic,

Some hardbake or a bit of butter-scotch

Will work on him like magic.

To contradict a character so rich

In trusting love were simple blindness—

He's one of those exalted natures which

Will only yield to kindness!

*Lud.* I only yield to kindness !  
*Lisa.* And O, the bygone bliss !  
 And O, the present pain !  
 That flower and that kiss—  
 That simple flower—that tender kiss  
 I ne'er shall give again !

[*Exit, weeping.*]

*Julia.* And now that everybody has gone, and we're happy and comfortably married, I want to have a few words with my new-born husband.

*Lud. (aside).* Yes, I expect you'll often have a few words with your new-born husband ! (*Aloud.*) Well, what is it ?

*Julia.* Why, I've been thinking that as you and I have to play our parts for life, it is most essential that we should come to a definite understanding as to how they shall be rendered. Now, I've been considering how I can make the most of the Grand Duchess.

*Lud.* Have you ? Well, if you'll take my advice, you'll make a very fine part of it.

*Julia.* Why, that's quite *my* idea.

*Lud.* I shouldn't make it one of your hoity-toity vixenish viragos.

*Julia.* You think not ?

*Lud.* Oh, I'm quite clear about that. I should make her a tender, gentle, submissive, affectionate (but not too affectionate) child-wife—timidly anxious to coil herself into her husband's heart, but kept in check by an awestruck reverence for his exalted intellectual qualities and his majestic personal appearance.

*Julia.* Oh, that is your idea of a good part ?

*Lud.* Yes—a wife who regards her husband's slightest wish as an inflexible law, and who ventures but rarely into his august presence, unless (which would happen seldom) he should summon her to appear before him. A crushed, despairing violet, whose blighted existence would culminate (all too soon) in a lonely pathetic death-scene ! A fine part, my dear.

*Julia.* Yes. There's a good deal to be said for your view of it. Now there are some actresses whom it would fit like a glove.

*Lud. (aside).* I wish I'd married one of 'em !

*Julia.* But, you see, I *must* consider my temperament. For instance, my temperament would demand some strong scenes of justifiable jealousy.

*Lud.* Oh, there's no difficulty about that. You shall have

*them.*  
*Julia.* What a lovely but detested rival—

*Lud.* Oh, *I'll* provide the rival.

*Julia.* Whom I should stab—stab—stab!

*Lud.* Oh, I wouldn't stab her. It's been done to death. I should treat her with a silent and contemptuous disdain, and delicately withdraw from a position which, to one of your sensitive nature, would be absolutely untenable. Dear me, I can see you delicately withdrawing, up centre and off!

*Julia.* Can you?

*Lud.* Yes. It's a fine situation—and in your hands, full of quiet pathos!

DUET.—LUDWIG and JULIA.

*Lud.* Now Julia, come,  
Consider it from  
This dainty point of view—  
A timid tender  
Feminine gender,  
Prompt to coyly coo—  
Yet silence seeking,  
Seldom speaking  
Till she's spoken to—  
A comfy, cosy,  
Rosy posy  
Innocent ingenoo!  
The part you're suited to—  
(To give the deuce her due)  
A sweet (O, jimity!)  
Miminy-piminy  
Innocent ingenoo!

ENSEMBLE.

LUD.	JULIA.
The part you're suited to— (To give the deuce her due) A sweet (O, jimity!) Miminy-piminy, Innocent ingenoo!	I'm much obliged to you, I don't think that would do— To play (O, jimity!) Miminy-piminy, Innocent ingenoo!
<i>Julia.</i> You forget my special magic (In a high dramatic sense) Lies in situations tragic— Undoubtedly intense. As I've justified promotion In the histrionic art, I'll submit to you my notion Of a first-rate part.	
<i>Lud.</i> Well, let us see your notion Of a first-rate part.	
<i>Julia</i> (dramatically). I have a rival! Frenzy thrilled, I find you both together! My heart stands still—with horror chilled— Hard as the millstone-nether!	

Then softly, slyly, snailly, snaky—  
 Crawly, creepy, quaily, quaky—  
 I track her on her homeward way,  
 As panther tracks her fated prey!  
 (Furiously.) I fly at her soft white throat—  
 The lily-white laughing leman!  
 On her agonizing gaze I gloat  
 With the glee of a dancing demon!  
 My rival the—I have no doubt of her—  
 So I hold on—till the breath is out of her!  
 —till the breath is out of her!  
 And then,—Remorse! Remorse!  
 O cold unpleasant corse,  
 Avaunt! Avaunt!  
 That lifeless form  
 I gaze upon—  
 That face, still warm  
 But weirdly wan—  
 Those eyes of glass  
 I contemplate—  
 And then, alas,  
 Too late—too late!  
 I find she is—your Aunt!  
 (Shuddering.) Remorse! Remorse!  
 Then, mad—mad—mad!  
 With fancies wild—chimerical—  
 Now sorrowful—silent—sad—  
 Now, hullo! hullo hysterical!  
 Ha! ha! ha! ha!  
 But whether I'm sad or whether I'm glad,  
 Mad! mad! mad! mad!  
 This calls for the resources of a high-class art,  
 And satisfies my notion of a first-rate part!  
 [Exit JULIA.]

*Enter all the Chorus, hurriedly, and in great excitement.*

CHORUS.

Your Highness, there's a party at the door—  
 Your Highness, at the door there is a party—  
 She says that we expect her,  
 But we do not recollect her,  
 For we never saw her countenance before!  
 With rage and indignation she is rife,  
 Because our welcome wasn't very hearty—  
 She's as sulky as a super,  
 And she's swearing like a trooper,  
 O, you never heard such language in your life!

*Enter BARONESS VON KRAKENFELDT, in a fury.*

Bar. With fury indescribable I burn!  
 With rage I'm nearly ready to explode!  
 There'll be grief and tribulation when I learn  
 To whom this slight unbearable is owed!

For whatever may be due I'll pay it double—  
There'll be terror indescribable and trouble!  
With a hurly-burly and a hubble-bubble  
I'll pay you for this pretty episode!

*All.* Oh, whatever may be due she'll pay it double!—  
It's very good of her to take the trouble—  
But we don't know what she means by "hubble-bubble"—  
No doubt it's an expression *à la mode*.

*Bar.* (to *LUDWIG*).

Do you know who I am?

*Lud.* (examining her). I don't;

Your countenance I can't fix, my dear.

*Bar.* This proves I'm not a sham.

(Showing pocket-handkerchief.)

*Lud.* (examining it).

It won't;

It only says "Krakenfeldt, Six," my dear.

*Bar.* Express your grief profound!

*Lud.* I shan't!

This tone I never allow, my love.

*Bar.* Rudolph at once produce!

*Lud.* I can't;

He isn't at home just now, my love!

*Bar.* (astonished). He isn't at home just now!

*All.* He isn't at home just now,

(dancing derisively) He has an appointment particular very—  
You'll find him, I think, in the town cemetery;  
And that's how we come to be making so merry,  
For he isn't at home just now!

*Bar.* But bless my heart and soul alive, it's impudence personified!  
I've come here to be matrimonially matrimonified!

*Lud.* For any disappointment I am sorry unaffectedly,

But yesterday that nobleman expired quite unexpectedly—

*All* (sobbing). Tol the riddle lo!

Tol the riddle lo!

Tol the riddle, lol the riddle, lol lol lay!

(Then laughing wildly.) Tol the riddle, lol the riddle, lol lol lay!

*Bar.* But this is most unexpected. He was well enough at a quarter to twelve yesterday.

*Lud.* Yes. He died at half-past eleven.

*Bar.* Bless me, how very sudden!

*Lud.* It was sudden.

*Bar.* But what in the world am I to do? I was to have been married to him to-day!

*All* (singing and dancing).

For any disappointment we are sorry unaffectedly,

But yesterday that nobleman expired quite unexpectedly—

Tol the riddle lol!

*Bar.* Is this Court Mourning or a Fancy Ball?

*Lud.* Well, it's a delicate combination of both effects. It is intended to express inconsolable grief for the decease of the late



Duke and ebullient joy at the accession of his successor. I am his successor. Permit me to present you to my Grand Duchess. (*Indicating JULIA.*)

*Bar.* Your Grand Duchess? Oh, your Highness! (*Curtlesying profoundly.*)

*Julia.* (*snceering at her.*) Old frump!

*Bar.* Humph! A recent creation, probably?

*Lud.* We were married only half-an-hour ago.

*Bar.* Exactly. I thought she seemed new to the position.

*Julia.* Ma'am, I don't know who you are, but I flatter myself I can do justice to *any* part on the very shortest notice.

*Bar.* My dear, under the circumstances you are doing admirably—and you'll improve with practice. It's so difficult to be a lady when one isn't born to it.

*Julia* (*in a rage, to LUDWIG.*) Am I to stand this? Am I not to be allowed to pull her to pieces?

*Lud.* (*aside to JULIA.*) No, no—it isn't Greek. Be a violet, I beg.

*Bar.* And now tell me all about this distressing circumstance. How did the Grand Duke die?

*Lud.* He perished nobly—in a Statutory Duel.

*Bar.* In a Statutory Duel? But that's only a civil death!—and the Act expires to-night, and then he will come to life again!

*Lud.* Well, no. Anxious to inaugurate my reign by conferring some inestimable boon on my people, I signalized this occasion by reviving the law for another hundred years.

*Bar.* For another hundred years? Then set the merry joy-bells ringing! Let festive epithalamia resound through these ancient halls! Cut the satisfying sandwich—broach the exhilarating Marsala—and let us rejoice to-day, if we never rejoice again!

*Lud.* But I don't think I quite understand. We have already rejoiced a good deal.

*Bar.* Happy man, you little reck of the extent of the good things you are in for. When you killed Rudolph you adopted all his overwhelming responsibilities. Know then that I, Caroline von Krakenfeldt, am the most overwhelming of them all!

*Lud.* But stop, stop—I've just been married to somebody else!

*Julia.* Yes, ma'am, to somebody else, ma'am! Do you understand, ma'am? To somebody else!

*Bar.* Do keep this young woman quiet; she fidgets me!

*Julia.* Fidgets you!

*Lud.* (*aside to JULIA*). Be a violet—a crushed, despairing violet.

*Julia*. Do you suppose I intend to give up a magnificent part without a struggle?

*Lud.* My good girl, she has the law on her side. Let us both bear this calamity with resignation. If you must struggle, go away and struggle in the seclusion of your chamber.

## CHORUS.

Now away to the wedding we go,  
 So summon the charioteers—  
 No kind of reluctance they show  
 To embark on their married careers.  
 Though *Julia's* emotion may flow  
 For the rest of her maidenly years,  
 To the wedding we eagerly go,  
 So summon the charioteers !  
 Now away, &c.

[*All dance off to wedding except JULIA.*]

## RECIT.—JULIA.

So ends my dream—so fades my vision fair !  
 Of hope no gleam—distraction and despair !  
 My cherished dreams, the Ducal throne to share,  
 That aim supreme has vanished into air !

## SONG.—JULIA.

Broken every promise plighted—  
 All is darksome—all is dreary.  
 Every new-born hope is blighted !  
 Sad and sorry—weak and weary !  
 Death the Friend or Death the Foe,  
 Shall I call upon thee ? No !  
 I will go on living, though  
 Sad and sorry—weak and weary !

No, no ! Let the bygone go by !  
 No good ever came of repining :  
 If to-day there are clouds o'er the sky,  
 To-morrow the sun may be shining !  
 To-morrow, be kind,  
 To-morrow, to me !  
 With loyalty blind  
 I curtsy to thee !  
 To-day is a day of illusion and sorrow,  
 So *viva* To-morrow, To-morrow, To-morrow !  
 God save you, To-morrow !  
 Your servant, To-morrow !  
 God save you, To-morrow, To-morrow, To-morrow !

[*Exit JULIA.*]

*Enter ERNEST.*

*Ern.* It's of no use—I can't wait any longer. At any risk I must gratify my urgent desire to know what is going on. (*Looking off.*) Why, what's that? Surely I see a wedding procession winding down the hill, dressed in my *Troilus and Cressida* costumes! That's Ludwig's doing! I see how it is—he found the time hang heavy on his hands, and is amusing himself by getting married to Lisa. No—it can't be to Lisa, for here she is!

*Enter LISA.*

*Lisa* (*not seeing him*). I really cannot stand seeing my Ludwig married twice in one day to somebody else!

*Ern.* Lisa!

[*LISA sees him, and stands as if transfixed with horror*

*Ern.* Come here—don't be a little fool—I want you.

[*LISA suddenly turns and bolts off*

*Ern.* Why, what's the matter with the little donkey? One would think she saw a ghost! But if he's not marrying Lisa, whom is he marrying? (*Suddenly.*) Julia! (*Much overcome.*) I see it all! The scoundrel! He had to adopt all my responsibilities, and he's shabbily taken advantage of the situation to marry the girl I'm engaged to! But no, it can't be Julia, for here she is!

*Enter JULIA.*

*Julia* (*not seeing him*). I've made up my mind. I won't stand it! I'll send in my notice at once!

*Ern.* Julia! Oh, what a relief!

[*JULIA gazes at him as if transfixed.*

*Ern.* Then you've not married Ludwig? You are still true to me?

[*JULIA turns and bolts in grotesque horror. ERNEST follows and stops her.*

*Ern.* Don't run away! Listen to me. Are you all crazy?

*Julia* (*in affected terror*). What would you with me, spectre? Oh, ain't his eyes sepulchral! And ain't his voice hollow! What are you doing out of your tomb at this time of day—apparition?

*Ern.* I do wish I could make you girls understand that I'm only technically dead, and that physically I'm as much alive as ever I was in my life!

*Julia.* Oh, but it's an awful thing to be haunted by a technical bogie!

*Ern.* You won't be haunted much longer. The law must be on its last legs, and in a few hours I shall come to life again—

resume all my social and civil functions, and claim my darling as my blushing bride!

*Julia.* Oh—then you haven't heard?

*Ern.* My love, I heard nothing. How could I? There are no daily papers where I come from.

*Julia.* Why, Ludwig challenged Rudolph and won, and now he's Grand Duke, and he's revived the law for another century!

*Ern.* What! But you're not serious—you're only joking!

*Julia.* My good sir, I'm a light-hearted girl, but I don't chaff bogies.

*Ern.* Well, that's the meanest dodge I ever heard of!

*Julia.* Shabby trick, I call it.

*Ern.* But you don't mean to say that you're going to cry off!

*Julia.* I really can't afford to wait until your time is up. You know, I've always set my face against long engagements.

*Ern.* Then defy the law and marry me now. We will fly to your native country, and I'll play broken-English in London as you play broken-German here!

*Julia.* No. These legal technicalities cannot be defied. Situated as you are, you have no power to make me your wife. At best you could only make me your widow.

*Ern.* Then be my widow—my little, dainty, winning, winsome widow!

*Julia.* Now what would be the good of that? Why, you goose! I should marry again within a month!

DUET.—ERNEST and JULIA.

*Ern.* If the light of love's lingering ember  
Has faded in gloom,  
You cannot neglect, O remember,  
A voice from the tomb!  
That stern supernatural diction  
Should act as a solemn restriction,  
Although by a mere legal fiction  
A voice from the tomb!

*JULIA (in affected terror).*

I own that that utterance chills me—  
It withers my bloom!  
With awful emotion it thrills me—  
That voice from the tomb!  
Oh, spectre, won't anything lay thee?  
Though pained to deny or gainsay thee,  
In this case I cannot obey thee,  
Thou voice from the tomb!

*(dancing).*

So, spectre appalling,  
I bid you good-day—  
Perhaps you'll be calling  
When passing this way.

Your bogeydom scorning,  
And all your love-lorning,  
I bid you good-morning,  
I bid you good-day.

*Ern. (furious).* My offer recalling,  
Your words I obey—  
Your fate is appalling,  
And full of dismay.  
To pay for this scorning  
I give you fair warning  
I'll haunt you each morning,  
Each night, and each day !

[Repeat Ensemble, and exeunt in opposite directions.

*Re-enter the Wedding Procession dancing.*

CHORUS.

Now bridegroom and bride let us toast  
In a magnum of merry champagne—  
Let us make of this moment the most,  
We may not be so lucky again.  
So drink to our sovereign host  
And his highly intelligent reign—  
His health and his bride's let us toast  
In a magnum of merry champagne !

[March heard.

*Lud. (recit.).* Why, who is this approaching,  
Upon our joy encroaching ?  
Some rascal come a-poaching  
Who's heard that wine we're broaching ?

*All.* Who may this be ?  
Who may this be ?  
Who is he ? Who is he ? Who is he ?

*Enter HERALD.*

*Her.* The Prince of Monte Carlo,  
From Mediterranean water,  
Has come here to bestow  
On you his beautiful daughter.  
They've paid off all they owe,  
As every statesman oughter—  
That Prince of Monte Carlo  
And his beautiful daughter !

*Chorus.* The Prince of Monte Carlo, &c.

*Her.* The Prince of Monte Carlo,  
Who is so very partickler,  
Has heard that you're also  
For ceremony a stickler—

Therefore he lets you know  
 By word of mouth auric'lar—  
 (That Prince of Monte Carlo  
 Who is so very particklar)—

*Chorus.* The Prince of Monte Carlo, &c.

*Her.* That Prince of Monte Carlo,  
 From Mediterranean water,  
 Has come here to bestow  
 On you his be-eutiful daughter !

*Lud. (recit.).* His Highness we know not—nor the locality  
 In which is situate his Principality ;  
 But, as he guesses by some odd fatality,  
 This is the shop for cut and dried formality !  
 Let him appear—  
 He'll find that we're  
 Remarkable for cut and dried formality.

[*Reprise of March. Exit HERALD. LUDWIG beckons his Court.*]

*Lud.* I have a plan—I'll tell you all the plot of it—  
 He wants formality—he shall have a lot of it !

[*Whispers to them, through symphony.*]

Conceal yourselves, and when I give the cue,  
 Spring out on him—you all know what to do !

[*All conceal themselves behind the draperies that enclose the stage.*]

*Pompous March. Enter the PRINCE and PRINCESS OF MONTE CARLO, attended by six theatrical-looking nobles and the Court Costumier.*

DUET.—PRINCE and PRINCESS.

*Prince.* We're rigged out in magnificent array  
 (Our own clothes are much gloomier)  
 In costumes which we've hired by the day  
 From a very well-known costumier.

*Cost. (bowing).* I am the well-known costumier.

*Princess.* With a brilliant staff a Prince should make a show  
 (It's a rule that never varies),  
 So we've engaged from the Theatre Monco  
 Six supernumeraries.

*Nobles.* We're the supernumeraries.

*All.* At a salary immense,  
 Quite regardless of expense,  
 Six supernumeraries !

*Prince.* They do not speak, for they break our grammar's laws,  
 And their language is lamentable—  
 And they never take off their gloves, because  
 Their nails are not presentable.

*Nobles.* Our nails are not presentable !

*Princess.* To account for their shortcomings manifest  
 We explain, in a whisper bated,  
 They are wealthy members of the brewing interest  
 To the Peerage elevated.  
*Nobles.* To the Peerage elevated.  
*All.* { They're } very, very rich,  
           { We're }  
 And accordingly, as sich,  
 To the Peerage elevated.

*Prince.* Well, my dear, here we are at last—just in time to compel Duke Rudolph to fulfil the terms of his marriage contract. Another hour and we should have been too late.

*Princess.* Yes, papa, and if you hadn't fortunately discovered a means of making an income by honest industry, we should never have got here at all.

*Prince.* Very true. Confined for the last two years within the precincts of my palace by an obdurate bootmaker who held a warrant for my arrest, I devoted my enforced leisure to a study of the doctrine of chances—mainly with the view of ascertaining whether there was the remotest chance of my ever going out for a walk again—and this led to the discovery of a singularly fascinating little round game which I have called *Roulette*, and by which, in one sitting, I won no less than five thousand francs! My first act was to pay my bootmaker—my second, to engage a good useful working set of second-hand nobles—and my third, to hurry you off to Pfennig Halbpennig as fast as a *train de luxe* could carry us!

*Princess.* Yes, and a pretty job-lot of second-hand nobles you've scraped together!

*Prince (doubtfully).* Pretty, you think? Humph! I don't know. I should say tol-lol, my love—only tol-lol. They are not wholly satisfactory. There is a certain air of unreality about them—they are not convincing.

*Cost.* But, my goot friend, what can you expect for eighteenpence a day!

*Prince.* Now take this Peer, for instance. What the deuce do you call him?

*Cost.* Him? Oh, he's a swell—he's the Duke of Riviera.

*Prince.* Oh, he's a Duke, is he? Well, that's no reason why he should look so confoundedly haughty. (*To Noble.*) Be affable, sir! (*Noble takes attitude of affability.*) That's better. (*Passing to another.*) Now, who's this with his moustache coming off?

*Cost.* Why, you're Viscount Mentone, ain't you?

*Noble.* Blest if I know. (*Turning up sword belt.*) It's wrote here—yes, Viscount Mentone.

*Cost.* Then vhy don't you say so? 'Old yerself up—you ain't carryin' sandwich boards now. [*Adjusts his moustache.*]

*Prince.* Now, once for all, you Peers—when His Highness arrives, don't stand like sticks, but appear to take an intelligent and sympathetic interest in what is going on. You needn't say anything, but let your gestures be in accordance with the spirit of the conversation. Now take the word from me. Affability! (*attitude*). Submission! (*attitude*). Surprise! (*attitude*). Shame! (*attitude*). Grief! (*attitude*). Joy! (*attitude*). That's better! You can do it if you like!

*Princess.* But, papa, where in the world is the Court? There is positively no one here to receive us! I can't help feeling that Rudolph wants to get out of it because I'm poor. He's a miserly little wretch—that's what he is.

*Prince.* Well, I shouldn't go so far as to say that. I should rather describe him as an enthusiastic collector of coins—of the realm—and we must not be too hard upon a numismatist if he feels a certain disinclination to part with some of his really very valuable specimens. It's a pretty hobby: I've often thought I should like to collect some coins myself.

*Princess.* Papa, I'm sure there's some one behind that curtain. I saw it move!

*Prince.* Then no doubt they are coming. Now mind, you Peers—haughty affability combined with a sense of what is due to your exalted ranks, or I'll fine you half a franc each—upon my soul, I will!

[*Gong. The curtains fly back and the Court are discovered. They give a wild yell and rush on to the stage dancing wildly, with PRINCE, PRINCESS, and Nobles, who are taken by surprise at first, but eventually join in a reckless dance. At the end all fall down exhausted.*]

*Lud.* There, what do you think of that? That's our official ceremonial for the reception of visitors of the very highest distinction.

*Prince.* (*puzzled*). It's very quaint—very curious indeed. Prettily footed, too. Prettily footed.

*Lud.* Would you like to see how we say "good-bye" to visitors of distinction? That ceremony is also performed with the foot.

*Prince.* Really, this tone—ah, but perhaps you have not completely grasped the situation?

*Lud.* Not altogether.

*Prince.* Ah, then I'll give you a lead over. (*Significantly.*) I am the father of the Princess of Monte Carlo. Doesn't that convey any idea to the Grand Ducal mind?



*Lud. (stolidly).* Nothing definite.

*Prince (aside).* H'm—very odd! Never mind—try again!  
*(Aloud.)* This is the daughter of the Prince of Monte Carlo.  
 Do you take?

*Lud. (still puzzled).* No—not yet. Go on—don't give it up—I daresay it will come presently.

*Prince.* Very odd—never mind—try again. (*With sly significance.*) Twenty years ago! Little doddle doddle! Two little doddle doddles! Happy father—hers and yours. Proud mother—yours and hers! Hah! Now you take? I see you do! I see you do!

*Lud.* Nothing is more annoying than to feel that you're not equal to the intellectual pressure of the conversation. I wish he'd say something intelligible.

*Prince.* You didn't expect me?

*Lud. (jumping at it)* No, no. I grasp that—thank you very much. (*Shaking hands with him.*) No, I did not expect you!

*Prince.* I thought not. But ha! ha! at last I have escaped from my enforced restraint. (*General movement of alarm.*) (*To crowd who are stealing off.*) No, no—you misunderstand me. I mean I've paid my debts!

*All.* Oh! (*They return.*)

*Princess (affectionately).* But, my darling, I'm afraid that even now you don't quite realize who I am! (*Embracing him.*)

*Baroness.* Why, you forward little hussy, how dare you?

[*Takes her away from* LUDWIG.]

*Lud.* You mustn't do that, my dear—never in the presence of the Grand Duchess, I beg!

*Princess (weeping).* Oh, papa, he's got a Grand Duchess!

*Lud.* A Grand Duchess! My good girl, I've got three Grand Duchesses!

*Princess.* Well, I'm sure! Papa, let's go away—this is not a respectable Court.

*Prince.* All these Grand Dukes have their little fancies, my love. This potentate appears to be collecting wives. It's a pretty hobby—I should like to collect a few myself. This (*admiring BARONESS*) is a charming specimen—an antique, I should say—of the early Merovingian period, if I'm not mistaken; and here's another—a Scotch lady, I think (*alluding to JULIA*), and (*alluding to LISA*) a little one thrown in. Two half-quarterns and a makeweight! (*To LUDWIG.*) Have you such a thing as a catalogue of the Museum?

*Princess.* But I cannot permit Rudolph to keep a museum—

*Lud.* Rudolph? Get along with you, I'm not Rudolph! Rudolph died yesterday!

*Prince and Princess.* What!

*Lud.* Quite suddenly—of—of a cardiac affection.

*Prince and Princess.* Of a cardiac affection?

*Lud.* Yes, a pack-of-cardiac affection. He fought a Statutory Duel with me and lost, and I took over all his engagements—including this imperfectly preserved old lady, to whom he has been engaged for the last three weeks.

*Princess.* Three weeks! But I've been engaged to him for the last twenty years!

*Baroness, Lisa, and Julia.* 'Twenty years!

*Prince (aside).* It's all right, my love—they can't get over that. (*Aloud.*) He's yours—take him, and hold him as tight as you can!

*Princess.* My own! (*Embracing LUDWIG.*)

*Lud.* Here's another!—the fourth in four-and-twenty hours! Would anybody else like to marry me? You, ma'am—or you—anybody! I'm getting used to it!

*Baroness.* But let me tell you, ma'am—

*Julia.* Why, you impudent little hussy—

*Lisa.* Oh, here's another—here's another! (*Weeping.*)

*PRINCESS.* Poor ladies, I'm very sorry for you all; but, you see, I've a prior claim. Come, away we go—there's not a moment to be lost!

CHORUS (*as they dance towards exit*).

Away to the wedding we'll go  
To summon the charioteers,  
Though her rival's emotion may flow  
In the form of impetuous tears—

[*At this moment RUDOLPH, ERNEST, and NOTARY appear. All kneel in astonishment.*]

RECITATIVE.

*Rud., Ern., and Not.* Forbear! This may not be!  
Frustrated are your plans!  
With paramount decree  
The Law forbids the banns!

*All.* 'The Law forbids the banns!

*Lud.* Not a bit of it! I've revived the Law for another century!

*Rud.* You didn't revive it! You couldn't revive it! You—you are an impostor, sir—a tuppenny rogue, sir! You—you never were, and in all human probability never will be—Grand Duke of Pfennig Anything!

*All.* What!!!

*Rud.* Never—never, never! (*Aside.*) Oh, my internal economy!

*Lud.* That's absurd, you know. I fought the Grand Duke. He drew a King, and I drew an Ace. He perished in inconceivable agonies on the spot. Now, as that's settled, we'll go on with the wedding.

*Rud.* It—it isn't settled. You—you can't. I—I—(*to NOTARY*) Oh, tell him—tell him! I can't!

*Not.* Well, the fact is, there's been a little mistake here. On reference to the Act that regulates Statutory Duels, I find it is expressly laid down that Ace shall count invariably as lowest!

*All.* As lowest!

*Rud.* (*breathlessly*). As lowest—lowest—lowest! So *you're* the ghost—ghost—ghost! (*Aside.*) Oh, what is the matter with me inside here!

*Ern.* Well, Julia, as it seems that the Law hasn't been revived—and as, consequently, I shall come to life in about three minutes—(*consulting his watch*)—

*Julia.* My objection falls to the ground. (*Resignedly.*) Very well!

*Princess.* And am I to understand that I was on the point of marrying a dead man without knowing it? (*To RUDOLPH, who revives.*) Oh, my love, what a narrow escape I've had!

*Rud.* Oh—you are the Princess of Monto Carlo, and you've turned up just in time! Well, you're an attractive little girl, you know, but you're as poor as a rat!

[*They retire up together.*]

*Lisa.* That's all very well, but what is to become of *me*? (*To LUDWIG.*) If you're a dead man—— [*Clock strikes three.*]

*Lud.* But I'm not. Time's up—the Act has expired—I've come to life—the parson is still in attendance, and we'll all be married directly.

*All.* Hurrah!

#### FINALE.

Happy couples, lightly treading,  
 Castle chapel will be quite full!  
 Each shall have a pretty wedding,  
 As, of course, is only rightful,  
 Though the bride be fair or frightful.  
 Contradiction little dreading,  
 This will be a day delightful—  
 Each shall have a pretty wedding!  
 Such a pretty, pretty wedding!  
 Such a pretty wedding!

[*All dance off to get married as the curtain falls.*]

# HIS EXCELLENCY.

*A COMIC OPERA.*

WRITTEN BY W. S. GILBERT.

COMPOSED BY OSMOND CARR.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE PRINCE REGENT, *disguised as Nils Egilsson, a Strolling Player.*

GEORGE GRIFFENFELD, *Governor of Elsinore.*

ERLING SYKKE, *a Young Sculptor.*

DR. TORTENSSEN, *a Young Physician.*

MATS MUNCK, *Syndic of Elsinore.*

CORPORAL HAROLD, *of the King's Hussars.*

A SENTRY.

FIRST OFFICER.

SECOND OFFICER.

CHRISTINA, *a Ballad Singer.*

NANNA }  
THORA { *Griffenfeld's Daughters.*

DAME HECLA CORTLANDT, *a Lady of Property.*

BLANCA, *a Vicandière.*

ELSA, *a Peasant Girl.*

### ACT I.

#### MARKET PLACE OF ELSINORE.

### ACT II.

#### COURTYARD OF THE CASTLE.

DATE—1801.

# HIS EXCELLENCY.

## ACT I.\*

SCENE.—*Market place of Elsinore. The townspeople (led by MATS MUNCK, the Syndic) are assembled to congratulate ERLING SYKKE on the completion of the statue of the Prince Regent of Denmark, which occupies the centre of the stage. Colours flying, bells ringing, cannon firing, and general symptoms of rejoicing.*

### OPENING CHORUS.

Set the merry bunting flying,  
Fire the cannon—ring the bells—  
Our great townsman glorifying,  
Who with sculptor's skill undying,  
All competitors excels.  
He, with his artistic spells,  
So the stubborn marble quells,  
That, to all intents elastic,  
It assumes, in manner plastic,  
Shapes heroic—shapes fantastic,  
As his mighty will compels !

*Mats Munck.* Chosen from his fellow creatures  
By our King—'twas wisely done—  
To perpetuate the features  
Of the Regent Prince, his son—  
Then created, by a penmark,  
At our gracious King's decree,  
Sculptor to the Court of Denmark  
And the Royal Familee !

*All.* Sculptor to the Court of Denmark  
And the Royal Familee !  
Leisure take—*festina lentè*—  
You have time before you, plenty,  
When at only two-and-twenty,  
(*Nemine dissidentè*)  
You're created with a penmark,  
Sculptor to the Court of Denmark—  
Sculptor to the Court of Denmark  
And the Royal Familee !

RECIT.—ERLING.

Most worthy Syndic and all friends assembled,  
 I thank you for your kind and cordial greeting—  
 But when you sing my praises, oh remember  
 How many worthier brethren pine and perish  
 For lack of that sunbeam of Royal favour,  
 Which by sheer April chance, has fallen on me  
 And warmed my budding powers into blossom !

Chorus.

No, no !  
 No April chance is here—  
 Thine art hath no compeer—  
 It triumphs all completely :  
 And, sooth to say, 'twere well  
 If Royal sunbeams always fell  
 So wisely, so discreetly !  
 So scatter flowers at his feet,  
 Sing him songs of jubilation,  
 And the king of sculptors greet  
 With a rosy coronation !

[Crowning him with flowers.]

Men.

Raise him on our brawny shoulders,  
 Cynosure of all beholders. (*They do so.*)

Women.

Hail him, scholar—hail him, gownsmen—  
 As your worthiest fellow townsman !

All.

Hail him, dunce and ignoramus,  
 For his fame will make you famous—  
 Hail him great, and hail him small.  
 Hail him one, and hail him all !

[*They carry him round stage, then place him on his feet ;  
 then exeunt all except ERLING and CHRISTINA, who  
 is then discovered seated at the foot of the pedestal.*]

RECIT.—ERLING.

My pretty one, why silent and alone ?  
 Why sit you thus in pensive meditation ?  
 Has melancholy marked you for her own,  
 Or sad disaster checked your heart's elation ?  
 I pray reply !

RECIT.—CHRISTINA.

Good sir, although I sit apart all day,  
 I am no prey to grief or sad disaster,  
 Truth is, I cannot tear myself away  
 From this fair form—thy work, oh, mighty master !  
 I'll tell you why !

BALLAD.—CHRISTINA.

I see with a silent awe,  
 In this faultless form allied  
 The exquisite grace  
 Of a royal race,

And the glory of knightly pride:  
 No blemish, or fault, or flaw,  
 But perfect in all is he,  
 I've learnt, in fine,  
 What a god divine  
 A chivalrous knight may be,  
 As gentle as lover's lay,  
 Or the dawn of a bright May-day,  
 Yet cast in the knightly mould  
 Of the glorious days of old—  
 My eyes are opened ; at last I see  
 What he who would win my heart must be.

Why look at the men we've known—  
 Their mouths will open and close—  
 They've ears likewise,  
 And a couple of eyes,  
 And the usual nubby nose ;  
 Each has a head of his own,  
 They've bodies, and legs, and feet—  
 I'm bound to admit  
 That in every whit  
 The catalogue's quite complete :—  
 But where is the godlike grace  
 That lights that marvellous face ?  
 Where is the brow serene ?  
 Where is the lordly mien ?  
 Ah, dullards and dolts are all I've known,  
 Compared with that marvellous, matchless stone !  
 [Exit CHRISTINA.]

*Erl.* That's a typical instance of feminine perversity—doesn't fall in love with me, which would be rational enough, but with the senseless inanimate work of my hands ! My dear fellow (*addressing statue*), I little thought, when I cut you out, that in course of time you'd return the compliment !

*Enter TORTENSSEN.*

*Tor.* Erling, congratulate me ! I've just received my patent of appointment as Personal Physician to His Majesty King Christian.. I have let my house, sold my practice, and I start for Copenhagen this day week !

*Erl.* My dear friend, I'm overjoyed. I'm in daily expectation of a Royal command to take up my office as Sculptor Extraordinary to the Royal Family—and we'll travel together. Of course you've heard that I've been promised a Countship ?

*Tor.* And I am to be created a Baron !

*Erl.* You don't say so ! To think that we two, who have toiled in obscurity from boyhood for a bare subsistence, should



both be raised at the same moment to such social and professional distinction!

*Tor.* It seems incredible! It can't be—but, no—that's out of the question.

*Erl.* What can't be?

*Tor.* It can't be one of Governor Griffenfeld's practical jokes?

*Erl.* My dear fellow, don't suggest such a thing. It would be too cruel—why, it would be our ruin!

*Tor.* But he is cruel. When a scheme for a practical joke enters his head he sticks at nothing in its accomplishment. Why, he has caused the very soldiers of the garrison—war-worn veterans as they are—to be drilled as ballet-girls, and to perform all their evolutions to dance steps, simply in order to make them ridiculous in the eyes of the girls they're engaged to!

*Erl.* He's a malicious devil enough, but he would hardly venture to play pranks in the name of his Sovereign. Besides, there's the statue—a commission from the King.

*Tor.* True. By the way, I suppose it is a commission from the King? *That's* not one of his Excellency's practical jokes?

*Erl.* Nonsense! Now, does that look like a practical joke? Why, I'm to get ten thousand rix-dollars for it! Now, as you know, I love his daughter Nanna devotedly, and she has hitherto treated me with contempt, because, as she says, I'm a mere tuppenny-halfpenny stone-cutter. Of course, that's only her humorous way of putting it.

*Tor.* And I adore Thora, who has always treated my pretensions with derision, because, as she says, I'm only a pitiful pill-roller. That's her epigrammatic way of expressing it.

*Erl.* But now that our positions are so immensely improved, surely we might renew our proposals with every prospect of success!

*Tor.* The very idea that occurred to me! My incomparable Thora——

*Erl.* Your what!

*Tor.* My incomparable Thora——

*Erl.* Ah—exactly! But—don't think me inquisitive—why don't you think Nanna incomparable?

*Tor.* Why, my dear fellow, if for no other reason, because you do.

*Erl.* What an obstinate dog you must be to refuse to consider her the divinest creature in the world, because I do! And you call yourself my friend!

*Tor.* Well, but really——

*Erl.* It's most unjust to the poor girl.

*Tor.* But if I loved Nanna you'd call me out.

*Erl.* What, you—call *you* out? Call out my old friend because he was of the same way of thinking as myself?—no!

*Tor.* But suppose I were successful?

*Erl.* Ah, but you wouldn't be. That is a contingency that we need not consider. Now do give up Thora and love Nanna—do, to oblige me.

*Tor.* Do you want everybody to love Nanna?

*Erl.* Of course I do. What I want is that all the world shall go mad over her, and that I shall be triumphant. Surely that's an intelligible position! Now mark:—

SONG.—ERLING.

When I bestow my bosom's store,  
No room for doubt

Must I descry:

All men must love whom I adore,  
Or we fall out,

All men and I.

Though poor their chance and slight their hope  
Who with my suit presume to cope,  
Yet must all men to gain her try,  
Or we fall out, all men and I.

When I am wed I'll hold them cheap  
Who sing and shout

With joyous cry.

At such a time all men must weep,  
Or we fall out,

All men and I.

As all men must my rivals be,  
When Nanna gives her hand to me  
All men must broken-hearted, sigh,  
Or we fall out, all men and I.

If I my lady vainly woe,  
And, her without,

I pine and die,

Mankind at large must perish, too,  
Or we fall out,

Mankind and I.

Who lives when I find life too long  
Would seem to say that I am wrong.  
When I expire all men must die,  
Or we fall out, all men and I!

*Enter NANNA and THORA.*

NANNA (*pretending not to see ERLING and TORTENSSEN*).  
And they're so clever, said I—such talented young men—so extraordinarily good-looking, too—and so kind to their poor old mothers!

THORA. And now that they're going to be raised to the peerage they'll have nothing to say to a couple of middle-class nobodies like us! (*Suddenly.*) Oh my goodness, here they are! Oh what have I said!

DUET.—NANNA and THORA.

Thora. Oh my goodness, here's the nobility!  
 Nanna. Gracious me, how very embarrassing!  
 Thora. We're such every day gentility—  
 Bless me, how exceedingly harassing!  
 Nanna. Pray, you pardon us!  
 Don't be hard on us!  
 Thora. Most confusing your regard on us!  
 Both. Never was I so dazed, I think!  
 Into the ground I'd like to sink!  
 Thora. Can't you see they're high society?  
 Nanna. Don't they sneer like people of quality?  
 Thora. If we seem to lack propriety,  
 Pray forgive our silly frivolity!  
 Nanna. Treat with charity  
 Our vulgarity—  
 Thora. 'Twixt us there's so much disparity  
 Both. Very superior persons, you!  
 Gracious goodness, what shall we do?

Erl. Then, Miss Nanna, you've heard of our good fortune?

Nanna. Indeed I have! I'm quite uncomfortable in the presence of such grandees!

Thora. We're so unaccustomed to aristocratic circles that really we hardly know how we ought to address you!

Tor. Oh, we haven't been ennobled yet.

Thora. Haven't you really? Come, that makes conversation easier. Still, a Personal Physician to the King—

Nanna. And a Sculptor Extraordinary to the Royal Family—

Thora. And we're only the daughters of an obscure provincial Governor! Oh, really I think we'd better go. It's so much wiser to keep to one's own rank in life!

Erl. Miss Nanna, pray be reassured; we have no desire to presume on our promotion. Indeed, you overrate our importance.

Thora. It seems impossible. I really think we'd better go.

Tor. No, don't do that. Be quite unembarrassed—entirely at your ease, and try to imagine that we are nobody in particular.

Thora. Oh, but that demands a tremendous effort of the imagination. Still, I'll try (*tries*).

Tor. Have you got it?

Thora. Not yet, but I won't be beaten. I'll try again (*tries again*).

*Nanna (trying).* Oh, I shall never do it! Did you say nobody in particular?

*Erl.* Just a couple of mere everyday, commonplace professional men.

*Nanna.* Well, it can't be done—that's all! It's ridiculous to expect it.

*Erl. (aside).* Now's my time, I think! (*Aloud.*) Miss Nanna, as you know, we have both loved you and your sister—and we've often told you so, and you snubbed us, and we deserved it. But now that we are well off, and Court personages, and going to be ennobled, we venture to—to—

*Nanna.* Not to offer us your hands. No—don't say that—don't turn our heads and give us ideas above our station!

*Thora.* Oh! (*crying out*). Oh, I've got an idea above my station! Oh, it's all the way up there, ever so high!

[*Pointing up.*]

*The Others (looking up).* Where? Where?

*Thora.* Bal-loon! Ha! ha! ha!

*Erl.* I do believe you are laughing at us!

*Thora (to Nanna).* Oh, aren't the nobility shrewd?

*Nanna.* And isn't the aristocracy quick at grasping a situation?

*Thora.* But come, we'll be serious. Are you really in earnest when you make us this intoxicating offer?

*Tor.* Absolutely.

*Erl.* More serious than we ever were in our lives.

*Nanna.* Very good, that's business, and I'll tell you what we'll do.

QUARTETT.—NANNA, THORA, ERLING, and TORTENSSSEN.

*Nanna.* If all is as you say—  
If honour and wealth and glory  
Of every sort  
Are your's—

*Thora.* In short,  
If you're not telling a story—

*Nanna.* If you are a Count some day—

*Thora.* A Baron if you're created—  
And all turns out  
Beyond all doubt

Precisely as you've stated—  
*Nanna.* Court sculptor and a peer,  
With ever so much a year,

Precisely as you've stated—  
*Thora.* Physician to the King  
With honours and everything,  
Precisely as you've stated—

- Nanna and Thora.* Then I will be your bride—  
*Erl. and Tor.* Oh joy!  
*Nanna and Thora.* And I your bride will be!  
*Erl. and Tor.* Then let us make merry.  
 It's evident, very,  
 That day we soon shall see—  
*Nanna and Thora.* When you are qualified—  
*Erl. and Tor.* Oh joy!  
*Nanna and Thora.* To marry you we agree!  
*Erl. and Tor.* Oh happy decision!  
 Oh vision Elysian!  
 That day we soon shall see!
- Erl.* Compared with our own  
 All others are inkiness!  
*Tor.* They are, alone,  
 Two visions of pinkiness!  
*Erl.* Pinkiness, veiled  
 With ivory pellicle—  
*Tor.* Everywhere hailed  
 As simply angelical!  
*Nanna.* That isn't true,  
 Ridiculous chatterer!  
*Thora.* Go along, do,  
 Unscrupulous flatterer!  
*Nanna.* Only a sweet  
 Individuality!  
*Thora.* Dainty and neat,  
 But merely mortality!  
*Erl. and Tor.* Merely mortality? Merely mortality?  
 With such a bewitching individuality?  
*Nanna and Thora.* Merely two pretty young ladies of quality,  
 Piquante and pleasant—but merely mortality!
- All.* Then { I } will be my bride—oh joy!  
 And { I your } bride will be! &c.  
 [Dance and exeunt ERLING and TORTENSEN.]
- Nanna.* Oh, Thora! (*laughing.*)  
*Thora.* Oh, Nanna! (*laughing.*)  
*Nanna.* They believe it all!  
*Thora.* Every word!  
*Nanna.* What geese!  
*Thora.* Personal Physician to the King!  
*Nanna.* Sculptor Extraordinary to the Royal Family!  
*Thora.* It serves them right for presuming to aspire to our  
 affections. It was papa's idea! Oh, it's a grand thing to have  
 a father who will condescend to play practical jokes on the very  
 meanest rather than allow the family dignity to be insulted.  
*Nanna.* Dear papa! He has such humour!  
*Thora.* So much invention!

*Nanna.* Such an uncontrollable flow of animal spirits!

*Thora.* Such a gentle, harmless, refined, and utterly inoffensive notion of fun! Here he comes, attended by his guard—all drilled as ballet-girls. Now there's a happy idea!

*Nanna.* Delightful! Dear papa is never so happy as when he is making dignified people ridiculous!

*Enter Chorus of Girls, led by ELSA.*

CHORUS.

Here are warriors all ablaze,  
 Sabre and epaulettes, ha! ha!  
 All of them ordered to spend their days  
 Practising minuets, ha! ha!  
 Never was seen such tawdry trickery,  
 Soldiers, tough as oak or hickory,  
 Turned to votaries of Terpsichore,  
 Mincing marionettes, ha! ha!  
 Never was seen in soldier's training  
 Spectacle half so entertaining!  
 Never was seen such tuppenny trickery—  
 Soldiers, tough as the oak or hickory,  
 Turned to votaries of Terpsichore,  
 Mincing marionettes, ha! ha!

*Enter Soldiers dancing, led by HAROLD and followed by BLANCA.*

*Har.* Though I'm a soldier, all pugnacity,  
 Into your presence I'm made to come  
 In the contemptible capacity  
 Of a confounded teetotum!

*Chorus of } In the contemptible capacity*  
*Soldiers. } Of a confounded teetotum.*

*Har.* Although the Governor's jokes are numerous,  
 This is a joke we fail to see—

If this is the Governor's fun so humorous,  
 Bother the Governor's fun, say we!

*Chorus of } If this is the Governor's fun so humorous,*  
*Soldiers. } Bother the Governor's fun, say we!*

*Har.* Oh you may laugh at our dancing-schoolery—

It's all very well, it amuses *you*,  
 But how would *you* like this dashed tomfoolery  
 Every day from ten to two?

*Chorus of } How would *you* like this dashed tomfoolery*  
*Soldiers. } Every day from ten to two?*

*Har. (to Soldiers).* You can halt for a moment. The Governor's stopped to make a butter slide on the Syndic's doorstep. (*Soldiers halt—to BLANCA.*) It's a little unkind to laugh at us, Blanca, for you know we can't help it—from 10 to 2.

*Blan.* It's a little unkind to complain of our laughing at you, for you know *we* can't help it—from 10 to 2.

*Elsa.* We can none of us help it—you're all so ridiculous!

*Har.* I think my betrothed wife might sympathize with the absurdity of my position. I think *all* our betrothed wives might sympathize with the absurdity of *all* our positions.

*Elsa.* We sympathize with you as hard as we can, *after* 2. We can't do it *before* 2, because we're laughing all the time.

*Blan.* From 2 to 10 you're men, and we're engaged to you. From 10 to 2 you're hoppedegigs, and it's off.

*Elsa.* That exactly describes it.

*Har.* Yes, but at that rate we shall never get any forrarder. Besides, who knows what may happen from 10 to 2? You might get engaged to somebody else—to the Sergeant-Major, for instance—he's always fooling around you.

*Blan.* Well, of course we don't want to waste our mornings; but even if I were engaged to him from 10 to 2, I should always be true to you from 2 to 10.

*Har.* It's not enough. It's incomplete.

*Elsa.* Take care, the Governor's coming.

*Har.* Oh, confound it—off we go again!

[*Soldiers resume dancing.*]

*Enter* GOVERNOR GRIFFENFELD. *He has a pound of butter in his hand.*

*Grif. (to Soldiers).* Ah, my fine fellows, still at it? Got your second wind? That's right—capital exercise! Nothing like it. Here, you can eat this—I've done with it. (*Giving butter to HAROLD.*) 'The Syndic went down like a shot!

*Har. (dancing).* I beg your Exoellency's pardon, but—may we halt for a moment? We've danced for nearly three miles up-hill, and it's a hot day, and we're feeling a little faint.

*Grif.* Always craving for some unreasonable indulgence! Selfish dogs, all of you! Well, you may halt for five minutes.

*Har.* Thank you very much. (*To Soldiers.*) Selfish dogs—Halt! (*They halt.*)

*Grif.* Anything else?

*Har.* Well, I *have* a request to make. The fact is, the troops do feel the humiliation of being drilled like ballet-girls.

*Grif.* Bless my heart, you surprise me! Don't they like ballet-girls?

*Har.* Oh, they're very fond of ballet-girls, but they don't want to *be* ballet-girls, because when you *are* a ballet-girl, you don't seem to care so much about ballet-girls as you do when—when you're something quite different.

*Grif.* But don't your men see how much amusement they create? Can't they see that all the girls are laughing at them? Have they no sense of humour?

*Har.* Oh, they've a distinct sense of humour; but to enjoy this sort of thing completely you want to see it from a distance. You see it from a distance, and it ought to be devilish funny; but we are close to it—in fact, we are it—and when you are it, you don't seem to care so much about it, as you do when—when you are something quite different. The fact is, the point of a joke is like the point of a needle—hold the needle sideways and it's plain enough, but when it is directed straight at you—well, it's not always very easy to see the point of it.

*Grif.* Nonsense! I can see a joke plain enough even when I'm its victim. Take my unfortunate love affair——

*Har.* Ah, ridiculous business that! [*Soldiers laugh.*]

*Grif.* No comments, sir!

*Har. (to Soldiers).* No comments, gentlemen!

*Grif.* Take my unfortunate love affair. The late Governor, when I was only his deputy, was about to be married to an elderly lady of a singularly explosive disposition. They simply doted on each other. Now when you see two old donkeys simply doting on each other, your course is obvious—you set to work——

*Har.* To wheedle the old lady——

*Grif.* Away from the old gentleman.

*Har.* Ha! ha! you little rogue!

[*HAROLD digs GRIFFENFELD in the ribs.*]

*Grif.* Don't do that, sir!

*Har. (to Soldiers).* Don't do that, gentlemen!

*Grif.* Well, after some respectful attentions, she accepted me in this letter (*producing a letter*) in which she stipulated that the matter should be kept a profound secret until an excuse could be found for sending the old gentleman about his business. But, as luck would have it, the Governor died suddenly and I succeeded him, before I had time to explain that it was only my fun——

*Har. and Soldiers.* Ha! ha! (*Suddenly serious*)—I beg your pardon—I don't know what they're laughing at.

*Grif.* And so there I was—regularly trapped into a ridiculous engagement, which I can't for the life of me see my way out of. The situation is most unpleasant—most unpleasant. But do you suppose I don't see the fun of it? Why, I can't think of it without going into convulsions! Ha! ha!

*Har. and Soldiers.* Ha! ha! ha!

*Grif.* She's sixty!



*Har. and Soldiers.* Ha! ha! ha!

*Grif.* Wears a wig!

*Har. and Soldiers.* Ha! ha! ha!

*Grif.* Don't overdo it, sir!

*Har.* Don't overdo it, gentlemen!

*Grif.* That's quite enough. It's a very good joke, but not as good a joke as all that. Impudent puppies!—be off with you.

*Har. (to Soldiers).* Impudent puppies!—inwards turn—Chassez!

*[Harold and soldiers dance off, followed by girls laughing and chattering.]*

*Grif.* Upon my word, there's no such thing as gratitude. I do all I can to make my soldiers amusing—I place them in all kinds of ridiculous situations—I make them a source of entertainment to a whole township of attractive girls, and instead of being pleased and grateful for the attention, they growl like so many sore-eared bears!

*Enter Dame CORTLANDT skittishly, with a folded note in her hand.*

*Dame.* Why, here's my little man after all! I've been looking for him everywhere. Why does he hide himself away from his loving Hecla?

*Grif.* Eh? Oh, it's you, is it? (*She puts her arm round his neck.*) Don't do that—you rumples me. What have you got there?

*Dame.* It's a note, you jealous boy! Not for you—oh dear no! It's a pretty little pink and white *billet doux* addressed to a pretty little pink and white gentleman, begging him to make an appointment to meet a pretty little pink and white lady, all alone! That's me! Now what do you think of *that*?

*Grif.* Well, if you ask me, I don't think he'll come.

*Dame.* Oh yes, he will! He'll come fast enough. But there—it's cruel to keep my pet in suspense—

*Grif.* God bless me, you don't suppose I care whom you meet!

*Dame (suddenly furious).* What's that? Say that again! Once more! Come, out with it!

*Grif. (alarmed).* I say that I've such perfect confidence in your moral character that I don't trouble myself to inquire whom you make appointments with.

*Dame (relieved).* Oh, was that all? But you shouldn't upset me, George. Within this fragile body two tremendous powers are in perpetual antagonism—a Diabolical Temper and an Iron

Will. At first it didn't seem to be any affair of mine, and I determined to let them fight it out among themselves; but this internal conflict of irresistible forces is very wearing, George, and I begin to wish they'd settle it one way or the other.

*Grif.* Oh, what's the odds?

*Dame (temper rising).* About seven to two on the Temper just now, George. (*Struggling to repress it.*) No, the Will triumphs! (*Playfully.*) Now, shall I tell my little man who it is? [*Placing her arm round his neck.*]

*Grif.* Oh, bother! Don't go on like that! You're too old!

*Dame (suddenly furious).* Eh? What was that? Too old! I'm too old! Oh, hold me down—hold me down! Bottle me up, and tie down the cork, or I shall go mad! mad! mad!

*Grif.* Don't go on like that—it's so jumpy!

*Dame (struggling with herself).* You—you said I was too old!

*Grif.* Well, I'm too old. You're not, but I am. Can't you take a joke? Can't anybody take a joke?

*Dame.* You were not in earnest?

*Grif.* Earnest! Am I ever in earnest?

*Dame (with an effort).* All right, dear—don't be afraid—it's down again! Well, then, this is a letter requesting Master Mats Munck, the Syndic, to take my instructions for drawing up the settlements with a view to my forthcoming marriage. But I sha'n't tell you how I'm going to deal with my property. That will be a little surprise for you during the honeymoon.

*Grif. (aside).* A letter to the Syndic? The very thing! It may help me to carry out my plot for compromising her with him. (*Aloud.*) Give it to me. I shall see him presently, and I'll hand it to him.

*Dame.* To be sure I will. (*Giving it to him.*) And now about the date.

*Grif.* What date?

*Dame.* Why, the date of our marriage, you ardent creature!

*Grif.* Oh, yes!—come and sit down, and we'll talk it over. (*She sits at his feet.*) There—like that. Cosy, isn't it?

*Dame (shyly).* Oh, George!

*Grif.* Now suppose—I only say suppose, you know—

*Dame.* Yes—like a fairy tale.

*Grif.* Exactly—like a fairy tale. Now suppose that one fine morning you discovered that all this lovemaking of mine was only one of my practical jokes! Ha! ha! ha!

*Dame.* Ha! ha! ha! (*working herself up into a rage.*) Stop a bit! stop a bit! They're fighting it out.

*Grif. (earnestly).* Two to one on the Will! Two to one on the Will!

*Dame.* Wins easy, George! It's all right again. Go on, dear.

*Grif.* No, but really now, what would you say if you found out, quite unexpectedly, that I wasn't in earnest, and that I only proposed to you because—because somebody bet me I wouldn't?

*Dame (working herself up).* Bet you you wouldn't—bet you you wouldn't! What would I do—what would I do—what would I do?

*Grif.* Now don't go on like that! It's most unpleasant. I don't think you know how creepy you are when you do that. Oh, lord, she's off again!

DUET.—GOVERNOR and DAME CORTLANDT.

*Dame.* Now what would I do if you proved untrue, and the suit you pressed were an idle jest, and the conjugal yoke a brainless joke, and if marry your darling you couldn't?

*Grif.* Yes, what would you do if I proved untrue,  
And if marry my darling I couldn't?

*Dame.* What would I say if you owned some day that, a wager to win, you had taken me in, and the fact disclosed that you just proposed because somebody bet you you wouldn't?

*Grif.* If I owned some day that I sung that lay,  
Because somebody bet me I wouldn't?

*Dame.* Why, the trembling rock from an earthquake's shock, and the ocean's roar on the rock-bound shore, and the hell-babe's scream were a peaceful dream, to the terrible broth of my brewing;

The tiger's gnash, and the cut-throat's gash, and the foeman's clash, and the thunder-crash of eternal smash were unmeaning trash, compared with my hullabalooing!

ENSEMBLE.

GOVERNOR (*aside*).

DAME.

It might, perhaps, be rather rash  
The truth upon her mind to flash  
If an earthquake's shock were idle  
trash

Compared with her hulla-  
ballooing!

Take care, you'll find it rather rash  
My matrimonial hopes to dash,  
For an earthquake's shock were  
idle trash

Compared with my hulla-  
ballooing!

*Dame.* Like grey screech-owl (that hideous fowl) in a midnight cowl  
I'd slink and prow! till a horrible howl and a tiger's growl had  
told the world I'd found you!

With object fell and a yelp and yell, on Vengeance' wing at my foe  
I'd spring, and face to face in a close embrace I'd wind my arms  
around you!

Your heart I'd fear from its loathsome lair—I'd pluck out your eyes,  
and your tongue likewise—and limb from limb, with a growling  
grim, I'd rend him who pooh poohs me!

(*Recovering herself.*) Excuse me, please—when people tease, by slow degrees I kick up a breeze which you can't appease—it's quite a disease—I'll go and lie down—excuse me!

[*Exit DAME CORTLANDT.*]

*Grif.* This is getting a little too hot to be pleasant. But this letter to the Syndic is simply providential. It's exactly what I wanted to make my innocent little plot complete (*tears it up*). Now where are those two girls of mine? They ought to be back by this time. (*Enter NANNA and THORA.*) Oh, here you are! Well, have you seen the Syndic?

*Nanna.* Yes, and we've carried out all your instructions.

*Grif.* Good girls.

*Nanna.* We told him that we had the best possible reason to know that the wealthy old lady was particularly well disposed towards him, and that a declaration from him would receive polite and immediate attention.

*Thora.* So the silly old gentleman went off his head with joy—did extraordinary things with the office-stool, and at once wrote his declaration, and gave to us to deliver (*produces it*). Here it is.

*Grif.* Thank you (*giving her the letter which he formerly received from DAME CORTLANDT*). The old lady's reply.

*Thora.* What, already?

*Nanna.* Wonderful invention, steam!

*Grif.* Hush! (*Aside to them.*) It's the very letter in which she accepted me under seal of secrecy, when I was only Deputy Governor!

*Nanna.* Oh, you sly old papa!

*Grif.* Ha! ha! ha! It will do for him just as well as it did for me. And it will make him so happy!

TRIO.—GRIFFENFELD, NANNA, and THORA.

*All.* Oh what a fund of joy jocund lies hid in harmless hoaxes!

What keen enjoyment springs

From cheap and simple things!

What deep delight from sources trite inventive humour  
coaxes,

That pain and trouble brew

For every one but you!

*Grif.* Gunpowder placed inside its waist improves a mild  
Havanah,

Its unexpected flash

Burns eyebrows and moustache.

*Nanna.* When people dine no kind of wine beats ipecacuanha,  
But common-sense suggests

You keep it for your guests—

- Thora.* Then naught annoys the organ boys like throwing red-hot coppers,  
*Nanna.* And much amusement bides  
 In common butter-slides :  
*Grif.* And stringy snares across the stairs cause unexpected coppers.  
*Thora.* Coal scuttles, recollect,  
 Produce the same effect.  
*Grif.* A man possessed  
 Of common-sense  
 Need not invest  
 At great expense—  
*Nanna.* It does not call  
 For pocket deep,  
*Thora.* These jokes are all  
 Extremely cheap.  
*All.* If you commence with eighteenpence—it's all you'll have to pay ;  
 You may command a pleasant and a most instructive day.  
*Grif.* A good spring gun breeds endless fun, and makes men jump like rockets—  
*Thora.* And turnip-heads on posts  
 Make very decent ghosts.  
*Grif.* Then hornets sting like anything, when placed in waistcoat pockets—  
*Nanna.* Burnt cork and walnut juice  
 Are not without their use.  
*Grif.* No fun compares with easy chairs whose seats are stuffed with needles—  
*Thora.* Live shrimps their patience tax  
 When put down people's backs —  
*Grif.* Surprising, too, what one can do with a pint of fat black-beetles—  
*Nanna.* And treacle on a chair  
 Will make a Quaker swear !  
*Thora.* Then sharp tin tacks  
 And pocket squirts—  
*Grif.* And cobbler's wax  
 For ladies' skirts—  
*Nanna.* And slimy slugs  
 On bedroom floors—  
*Grif.* And water jugs  
 On open doors—  
*All.* Prepared with these cheap properties, amusing tricks to play,  
 Upon a friend a man may spend a most delightful day !

[*Exeunt.*]*Enter two Officers, who look cautiously round.**1st Off.* Is the coast clear ?*2nd Off.* Quite—there's no one in sight.[*First Officer beckons off. Enter the REGENT dressed picturesquely as a tattered vagabond. Both Officers bow deferentially.*]

*Reg.* Who were those who left as you arrived?

*1st Off.* The Governor Griffenfeld, your Royal Highness, and his two daughters.

*Reg.* The fellow whose disgraceful practical jokes are the subject of such general complaint?

*2nd Off.* The same, sir.

*Reg.* Well, the expostulations of the townspeople have reached us in shoals, and we are resolved to judge for ourselves as to their truth or falsehood. For the purpose of our present disguise, we are Nils Egilsson—a strolling player—a vagabond—and as such you may describe me if any question as to my identity should arise. You can leave me now, but hold yourselves in readiness in case of emergency.

*1st Off.* As your Royal Highness pleases.

[*Officers bow and exeunt.*]

*Reg.* Whom have we here? (*looking at statue*). Oho! my princely self, eh? Upon my word, fairly good for a provincial town. In truth, a very public-spirited thing to have done. Governor Griffenfeld must have inspired this—upon my word, my heart softens towards the little scoundrel. But no—on second thoughts, *he* would have commissioned a caricature. (*Enter CHRISTINA with her guitar.*) Who is this? A dainty maiden indeed!

*Chris.* (*not seeing him*). It is a strange fascination that draws me hither! I have yet three principal streets, two squares, and the Castle Green to sing to—and they are all sure pay.—(*Puts down her guitar.*) Then how comes it that I find myself, every half hour, instinctively drifting towards the Market-place. It is not market-day, and there's nobody here except—(*looking at statue*) and if I sing to him he does not hear me, and if I talk to him I must needs talk for two. As thus: Good-morrow, my Lord. “Ah, Christina—hast thou done well to-day?” But indifferent well, my lord Prince, for I have taken naught and given all! “That were idly done, Christina. What hast thou given, and to whom?” My heart, my lord Prince, and to your Highness, for look you, I love you passing well—even I, who never loved a living man! “Some-what unmaidenly, this avowal—is it not, Christina?” It may seem so, my lord. “Thou shouldst have waited until I gave some sign.” I might have waited long, my lord, for your Highness is strangely reticent; and I might have peaked, pined, dwindled, drooped, and died in the waiting. “That were pitiful indeed, Christina.” I thank your lordship. Will you hear a poor ballad, my lord? “If it be fairly sung, Christina, and not too long.” It is not long, my lord, and I

will sing it with all my poor skill, so it shall please you. "Well, tune up, Christina—but I have no small change." I thank your Highness; I sing to you, not for your money, but for your love. The song runneth thus;—(*sees REGENT, who comes forward, offering her the guitar*) Oh, sir!

*Chris.* Ah!

[*Looks at statue, then at REGENT, and shows signs of terror.*]

*Reg.* Why, what is amiss with thee?

*Chris.* Sir, I am frightened! I thought at first—but I am a silly fool! I ask your pardon; but—you are so strangely like the Regent's statue, that, for the moment, I—oh, *who* are you?

*Reg.* I am Nils Egilsson—a strolling player—a flotsam and jetsam on the world's tide—tossed hither and thither as the wild waves will; but come good, come ill, always at the service of all pretty maids who need my offices.

*Chris.* Then—you are not a prince?

*Reg.* Not a prince? Oh, but I *am* a prince—very often! Every prince in turn from Nebuchadnezzar down to Louis the Sixteenth, when an engagement offers. A trifle out of repair just now, but even your theatrical princes have their vicissitudes, and Elsinore is not stage-struck. But times may mend, and who knows but that I shall yet play Hamlet on his native battlements?

*Chris.* Still, a real Prince——

*Reg.* Is not to be envied, take my word for it. Why, the very fact that he can't show his nose out of doors without an everlasting accompaniment of National Anthem is enough to make him turn Revolutionist, and cry aloud for his own downfall!

#### SONG.—REGENT.

A King, though he's pestered with cares,

Though, no doubt, he can often trepan them;

But one comes in a shape he can never escape—

The implacable National Anthem!

Though for quiet and rest he may yearn,

It pursues him at every turn—

No chance of forsaking

Its *rococo* numbers;

They haunt him when waking—

They poison his slumbers!

Like the Banbury Lady, whom every one knows,

He's cursed with its music wherever he goes!

Though its words but imperfectly rhyme,

And the devil himself couldn't scan them,

With composure polite he endures day and night

That illiterate National Anthem!

It serves a good purpose I own :  
 Its strains are devout and impressive—  
 Its heartstirring notes raise a lump in our throats  
 As we burn with devotion excessive :  
 But the King, who's been bored by that song  
 From his cradle—each day—all day long—  
 Who's heard it loud-shouted  
 By throats operatic,  
 And loyally spouted  
 By courtiers emphatic—  
 By soldier—by sailor—by drum and by fife—  
 Small blame if he thinks it the plague of his life !  
 While his subjects sing loudly and long,  
 Their King—who would willingly ban them—  
 Sits, worry disguising, anathematizing  
 That Bogie, the National Anthem !

*Chris.* It is pleasant to know that we are of kindred lot, for if you are a strolling player, why I am but a poor ballad-singer, and our callings have much in common. I am at my ease now, but at first—you will laugh at me, I know—I almost thought I was speaking to the Regent himself !

*Reg.* I have been given to understand that there is a certain resemblance.

*Chris.* It is marvellous ! Do you know his Highness, sir ?  
*[Anxiously.]*

*Reg.* Well, I can scarcely say. We have never met, face to face.

*Chris. (disappointed).* Then you do not know him.

*Reg.* Very good—then I do not know him : but—I know his tailor.

*Chris.* His tailor ?

*Reg.* Yes. I frequently see his tailor, and his tailor tells me, in strictest confidence, that (*impressively*) his Highness is *at least three inches more round the waist* than he is here represented to be ! So be prepared for a disappointment !

*Chris. (laughing).* Why, sir, I believe there is nothing in this wide world that concerns me less than the measure of his Highness's waist ! Such a trifle weighs but little with me.

*Reg. (aside).* It weighs a good deal with *me* ! (*Aloud.*) And do you pass much time in the society of his Highness's effigy ?

*Chris.* Why, in truth, much more than is prudent.

*Reg.* Oh, he won't hurt you—I should say that you were quite safe with *him*. But beware of the Regent himself, for men say that he is a terrible Turk !

*Chris.* The Regent, sir, is nought to me. Yet, to speak truly, I am loth to believe that there can be aught but good in one whom that statue so strongly resembles !



*Reg.* Then—I may take it that you do not believe there is much of evil in me?

*Chris. (confused).* Why, sir—in truth—nay, this is scarcely fair dealing. I spake not of yourself, but of the Regent.

*Reg.* And I so strongly resemble him!

*Chris.* I think, sir, I will go.

*Reg.* Nay, be not angry with me for drawing so pleasant a conclusion from premisses of your own making! (*Tenderly.*) I would fain hope that you are not angry with me.

*Chris.* Nay, sir, I am not angry. I spake foolishly, and I am well served. But I have tarried too long; I have to go to the Castle Green—I am to sing there.

*Reg.* Why, I am likewise bound thither, for I have to see the Governor. (*Tenderly.*) Who knows but that we may meet again!

*Chris. (moved).* It is very like. (*Recovering herself.*) But the day is speeding, and I have to sing for my supper. So fare you well, Master ——!

*Reg.* Nils Egilsson. (*Kissing her hand.*)

*Chris. (dreamily).* Nils Egilsson: I shall not forget that name, be very sure!

[*Exit CHRISTINA.*]

*Reg.* Well, as a bachelor heir-apparent, I've had a tolerably comprehensive experience of young ladies; but of all the maids I ever met, this is the fairest, the most winning, and the most original! What a refreshing experience! It's like the breath of the hay-field after a season of hot ball-rooms! We shall meet again, my pretty ballad-singer, unless I greatly err. And now to encounter this precious Governor.

*Enter GOVERNOR GRIFFENFELD.*

*Grif.* The Syndic has received his charmer's letter, and he's on the tip-toe of expectation and delight. I shall get rid of her—I shall get rid of her!

*Reg.* Not knowing the lady, but speaking on general principles, I should say that you couldn't do better.

*Grif.* Hallo, sir, who are you who presume to convert into a duologue that which was intended for a soliloquy?

*Reg.* I'm Nils Egilsson—strolling player—sadly out of repair, and greatly in need of a handsome salary, paid weekly in advance.

*Grif.* A professional rogue, eh?

*Reg.* Well—a technical rogue—much as a lawyer is a technical gentleman—that is to say, by Act of Parliament.

*Grif.* You pipe to a sharp note, sir. We keep a cage for

such gaol-birds as you. (*Aside.*) Where have I seen this fellow's face?

*Reg.* Well, I think I sing best behind bars.

*Grif. (aside).* Where have I seen this fellow's face?

*Reg.* Surely you're not the Governor?

*Grif.* Yes, sir, I am the Governor of this Province.

*Reg.* A thousand pardons! I took you for the borough constable. A hasty conclusion based upon a commendable absence of that superficial polish which the vulgar are but too apt to associate with the conception of a gentleman. The Governor! (*Bowing.*) A worshipful gentleman, I'll be sworn, appearances notwithstanding. A thousand pardons!

*Grif. (who, during this speech, has been studying the REGENT's face).* I have it! It's the statue! Why, he's marvellously like it! (*Aloud.*) Hark ye, sirrah! you are an actor, you say?

*Reg.* A poor actor.

*Grif.* Ready at a moment's notice to play any part that may be entrusted to you? Kings, princes, and so forth?

*Reg.* Why, I'm famous for my kings. There's an air of aristocratic impudence about me—you may have remarked it—which is eminently suited to your monarchs of genteel comedy. My tyrants, too, are much admired. "What, bearded to our face, and by a very boy? The moat is dry—load him with chains, and stifle him in its reeking mud! Ha! ha! I *will* be obeyed!"

*Grif.* Yes—that's not good, you know. Rather amateurish, I should say. Played a long engagement in the Theatre Royal Back Drawing Room, I should imagine. By the way, have you ever heard it remarked that you bear a close resemblance to a very dignified personage?

*Reg.* Eh? Oh, you mean the man who mends boots on the quay. That's very likely—he's my aunt.

*Grif.* The man who mends fiddlesticks!

*Reg.* I don't think I know him.

*Grif.* No, sir—not to the man who mends boots—to no less a person than the Prince Regent of Denmark.

*Reg.* The Prince Regent?

*Grif.* There he is. He's a common-looking fellow, and you are singularly like him. [*Pointing to statue.*]

*Reg.* You flatter me, I'm sure (*looking at statue*). Well, some fellows have the deuce's own luck. Here is a man—the heir to a throne—caressed, courted, and flattered by the highest in the land—pampered with every luxury that the ingenuity of the devil or man can devise—and, hang me! if, in addition to

all this, he isn't exactly like me! It's enough to turn the fellow's head!

*Grif.* He's an ugly fellow, sir, and so are you. Therein lies the chief resemblance. Now attend to me. If you will consent to personate His Highness for twenty-four hours, acting exactly as I shall prescribe to you, you shall have—well, you shall have five golden Freidrichs!

*Reg.* Five golden Freidrichs!

*Grif.* Then you consent?

*Reg.* Consent? What, is there that I wouldn't consent to for five golden Freidrichs? But my dress—it's a convenient outfit for summer weather; but not, I should say, what the Regent of Denmark would wear—except, perhaps, in the bosom of his family after the cares of State are over for the day.

*Grif.* I've provided for that. The sculptor of that statue borrowed a left-off suit of the Regent's from His Highness's valet—for artistic purposes. It's now at the Castle, packed up, ready to be returned. I should say it would fit you to a nicety.

*Reg. (aside).* I've not the least doubt of it. When am I to begin?

*Grif.* To-morrow morning. It'll be great fun!

*Reg.* It will be a tremendous joke.

*Grif.* So original! With such possibilities! Fancy—a sham Regent dispensing sham wealth and shain honours untold on all my sham friends—and then their disappointment when they discover that it's only my fun!

*Reg.* Ha! ha! I'm longing to begin!

[During the last few lines CHRISTINA has entered. She listens, concealed behind statue.]

DUET.—REGENT and GRIFFENFELD.

*Reg.* I've grasped your scheme, if I may say as much without intrusion:

As Regent-Prince I must ennoble all without exclusion,  
And scatter honours all around in liberal profusion—  
Then you'll step in and with a word, dispel the fond illusion!

*Grif.* Then I'll step in—

*Reg.* Then you'll step in—

*Grif.* And with a word—

*Reg.* And with a word—

Then you'll step in and, with a word, dispel the fond illusion!

*Grif. (excitedly).* Exactly so! exactly so! exactly so! exactly so!

For understand what I require—

Give every man his heart's desire,

Then I'll explain the ins and out—

In half an hour or thereabouts!

*Both.* Then { I'll } explain the ins and outs—

In half an hour or thereabouts!

ENSEMBLE.

Oh, human joy at best is brief—  
 Alas, too soon it's turned to grief!  
 So it's our duty, you'll allow,  
 Our fellow creatures to endow  
 With happiness complete and vast—

*Reg.*  
*Grif.*  
*Both.*

Although that happiness may last—  
 Although that happiness may last—  
 But half an hour or thereabouts!  
 But half an hour—  
 But half an hour—  
 But half an hour or thereabouts!

[*Exit* GRIFFENFELD.]

*Chris.* (*coming forward from behind statue*).

*Reg.* I overheard!  
 You did? Confusion!  
 But not a word  
 Of this delusion—  
 No single phrase—  
 No faint suggestion—  
 To haply raise  
 A doubt or question!

If fault or blunder visible  
 I make in this experiment—  
 Control your muscles risible,  
 And check untimely merriment.  
 Address me most respectfully—  
 Regard with silent shyness me—  
 With eyes cast down subjectively;—  
 And mind you "Royal Highness" me!  
 Now don't forget—now don't forget,  
 Be sure you "Royal Highness" me!

*Chris.*

With all devotion beautiful,  
 I'll favour your expedient—  
 I'll be your very dutiful—  
 I'll be your most obedient—  
 You'll find me all docility,  
 You miracle of shyness, you!  
 I'll curtsy with humility,  
 And always "Royal Highness" you!  
 I won't forget—I won't forget—  
 I'll always "Royal Highness" you!

ENSEMBLE.

Oh, never was seen  
 Such a pearl of a Prince,  
 With { his } dignified mien  
       { my }  
 He is } sure to convince:  
 I am }

In { his } gracious address  
       { my }

There is Royalty shown—  
 And a baby could guess

He's } the heir to a throne!  
       { I'm }

Ha! ha! ha! ha!—Ha! ha! ha! ha!

Oh a baby could guess he's the heir to a throne!

[*Exit in opposite directions.*]

*Enter the SYNDIC, with DAME CORTLANDT's letter in his hand.*

*Syn.* It's a singular thing, but I never yet proposed to a very unattractive old lady without being immediately accepted. Now here is an unattractive old lady—about to be married to no less a personage than the Governor of this Province, and I have only to beckon to her, and down comes the confiding old dove with no further thought about the Governor, except to stipulate that her change of intention shall be kept a secret from him for the present! Here comes the old dear, true to the appointment of her own making. How—how rich she looks, to be sure!

*Enter DAME CORTLANDT.*

*Dame (bashfully).* Master Munck—I—I ventured to send you a letter this morning.

*Syn.* A most delightful letter, and one that, believe me, I shall prize while I live!

*Dame (surprised).* You are vastly obliging! (*Aside.*) Collecting autographs, I suppose. (*Aloud.*) Now, you will understand that, for the reasons explained in my letter, I am most anxious that the subject of our conversation shall be kept a profound secret.

*Syn.* Madam, I will be most careful. You—you are the discreetest little gipsy in Denmark!

*Dame.* Sir!

*Syn.* Quite right—can't be too cautious, even between ourselves. I quite grasp the idea.

*Dame (aside).* He is singularly effusive for a confidential family lawyer! (*Aloud.*) I daresay that you are aware that I am well to do.

*Syn.* Well, I certainly have heard that Dame Cortlandt is a lady of some means—but oh, she does her lover a grave injustice if she imagines that he allowed a mercenary consideration to influence him.

*Dame (surprised).* Why, of course I know that!

*Syn.* Such a dainty, tight, trim, bewitching little rogue requires no—

*Dame (suddenly furious).* Eh? What's that? I'm a little rogue! This man presumes to tell me that I am a little rogue!

*Syn.* But, my dear lady—

*Dame.* Don't speak—they're fighting it out—they're fighting it out!

*Syn.* Bless my heart, how very interesting!

*Dame (having swallowed her anger—severely).* It's all right, Master Munck, and, for the moment, the Tempter is floored, but don't try that again. Perhaps—perhaps we had better discuss my affairs at another time—when you have slept it off, whatever it is.

*Syn.* No, don't go—let me gaze a little longer on—(*DAME about to break out.*) I didn't say it! I didn't say it! I stopped in time!

*Dame (aside).* He's very eccentric for a confidential family lawyer! (*Aloud.*) I wish you to take instructions about the settlements on the occasion of—(*bashfully*) my forthcoming marriage.

*Syn.* My dear lady!

[*Takes out note-book.*]

*Dame.* There are my two freehold farms, the three houses in Dentheim, and twelve thousand rix dollars in Government securities. I wish to settle all this, absolutely, on my dear husband.

*Syn.* What, all!!!

*Dame.* Every penny.

*Syn.* Dearest! (*DAME about to break out again.* *SYNDIC checks himself.*) I didn't say it! I didn't say it! I thought it, but I didn't say it!

DUET.—*DAME and SYNDIC.*

*Dame.* Now all that we've agreed upon, O—  
And all that's passed between us—  
No human soul must know,  
Be he a friend or foe.

*Syn.* You lean no broken reed upon, O—  
In Courts of Law and Venus  
(*I've practised much in both*)  
I'm always on my oath!

*Dame.* What always?

*Syn.* Always!

*Dame.* Always?

*Syn.* Always!

Always on my oath!

You'll find I am

Discreetly dumb,

So trust me, ma'am—

*Dame.*

The word is mum—



ENSEMBLE.

DAME (*aside*).

SYNDIC (*aside*).

What sentiments transgressional!

These gradual steps progressional,

O—  
It's bad, I've understood, for  
them,

O—  
Wait any time I would for  
them—

When gentlemen professional, O—

When gentlemen professional, O—

Take more than is quite good  
for them!

Gain widows rich, it's good for  
them!

*Both.* When gentlemen, gentlemen, gentlemen, gentlemen—

{ Take more than is good for them!

{ Widows gain, it's good for them!

[*Exeunt separately.*]

*Enter* ERLING SYKKE, *with large unopened official letter in his hand.*

*Erl.* At last—the reply to my letter announcing to His Majesty the completion of the statue! Every hope and every fear of my life lies within the four corners of this document. What may it not contain? Perhaps an order on the King's Treasurer for my ten thousand rix-dollars! Perhaps my appointment as Court Sculptor! Perhaps even my patent of Countship! I tremble so that I can scarcely open it!

[*NANNA has entered at the back. She creeps up to him with suppressed fun in her face.*]

*Nanna.* Oh, what a big letter! Whom is it from, and what's it all about?

*Erl.* Nanna, this letter is to seal your destiny and mine—so, as you are as much concerned with it as I am, I think we ought to open it together. It's—it's from the King's private secretary!

*Nanna.* Oh, do be quick and let's see what's in it!

*Erl.* You open it—I can't! (*Giving her the letter.*)

*Nanna.* I can. Now then—one! two! three!

[*NANNA opens it.*]

*Erl.* Read—read!

*Nanna (looking at it).* Oh! I don't think you'll like it. Oh! I'm sure you won't like it! (*Reads.*) "Sir—In reply to a letter in which you announce the completion of a statue of His Royal Highness Prince Frederick, alleged by you to have been commissioned by His Majesty, I have to inform you that His Majesty knows nothing about it."

*Erl. (stunned).* Knows nothing about it!



*Nanna.* There seems to be some mistake.

*Erl.* Some mistake! Why, what do you mean?

*Nanna.* Why that, at the first blush, it bears the appearance of being one of dear papa's practical jokes.

*Erl.* But it's ruin! Absolute ruin! Why, I spent every penny I possessed on the marble alone!

*Nanna.* I'm so sorry!

*Erl.* Sorry! I can't realize it! It stuns me! It's too cruel—too cruel! And the promise you made me——

*Nanna.* Oh, the promise! Ye — es — the *conditional* promise.

*Erl.* Don't tell me that was a hoax too! Give me some hope to cling to! I can bear it all if you'll only tell me that *you* won't discard me!

*Nanna.* Really, it's extremely awkward; but one must be a little prudent. I'm a very expensive young lady, and as it seems that you have no immediate prospect of being able to maintain an establishment, it would be really criminal on my part to involve you in further embarrassments.

[*ERLING sinks helplessly on pedestal of statue, and buries his head in his hands.*]

SONG.—NANNA.

My wedded life

Must every pleasure bring

On scale extensive!—

If I'm your wife

I must have everything

That's most expensive—

A lady's maid—

(My hair alone to do

I am not able)—

And I'm afraid

I've been accustomed to

A first-rate table.

These things one must consider when one marries—

And everything I wear must come from Paris!

Oh, think of that!

Oh, think of that!

I can't wear anything that's not from Paris!

From top to toes

Quite Frenchified I am,

If you examine.

And then—who knows?—

Perhaps some day a fam—

Perhaps a famine!

My argument's correct, if you examine,

What should we do, if there should come a f-famine!

Though in green pea  
 Yourself you needn't stint  
 In July sunny,  
 In Januaree  
 It really costs a mint—  
 A mint of money!  
 No lamb for us—  
 House lamb at Christmas sells  
 At prices handsome:  
 Asparagus,  
 In winter, parallels  
 A Monarch's ransom.  
 When purse to bread and butter barely reaches,  
 What is your wife to do for hot-house peaches?  
 Ah! tell me that!  
 Ah! tell me that!  
 What is your wife to do for hot-house peaches?  
 Your heart and hand  
 Though at my feet you lay,  
 All others scorning!  
 As matters stand,  
 There's nothing else to say  
 Except—good morning!  
 Though virtue be a husband's best adorning,  
 That won't pay rates and taxes—so, good morning!

[Exit NANNA.]

*Erl.* Cruel, cold calculating girl! What on earth am I to do?  
 Ruin and desolation stare me in the face!

*Enter TORTENSSEN in great excitement, with an open letter in his hand.*

*Tor.* Erling! I am tricked, swindled, undone! I have just received a letter from the King's secretary to say that my appointment is a hoax! I've sold my local practice, let my house, and Thora repudiates me with indignation and contempt!

*Erl.* Again the Governor's doing! I, also, have just learnt that the commission for the Regent's statue is a heartless fabrication, and I, too, am ruined—utterly and completely ruined!

*Tor.* My poor Erling!

*Erl.* But this is no time for idle regrets. A term must be put to this scoundrel's practices. We will call the people together, tell them of the infamous trick that has been played upon us, and then away to Copenhagen to lay the whole matter before the Regent himself!

*Tor.* We will, we will!

## FINALE.

*Erl. and Tor.* Come hither, every one,  
                     Come hither, all!  
 Let every mother's son  
                     Obey our call!  
 Come hither in your might,  
                     In stern parade,  
 And learn the deadly slight  
                     Upon you played!

*During this the Chorus, CHRISTINA, HAROLD, and BLANCA have entered.*

*All.* Why, who the deuce has dared to play  
 A trick, at Elsinore, to-day?  
                     Come, tell us quick,  
                     This scurvy trick,  
 Why, who the deuce has dared to play?

*Erl. (passionately).* That statue—who commissioned it?

*All.* The King!

*Erl.* And on that spot positioned it?

*All.* The King!

                    Court sculptor who created me,  
 And told me rank awaited me,  
 Which pleased you and elated me?

*All.* The King!

*Tor. (furiously).* Who raised me from obscurity?

*All.* The King!

*Tor.* And gilded my futurity?

*All.* The King!

*Tor.* Physician who appointed me?  
 With baron's rank anointed me,  
 Till foolish pride disjointed me?

*All.* The King!

                    The King he did and said it all,  
 He did this noble thing!  
 Give him the fame and credit all,  
                     His Majesty the King!  
                     God save the King!  
                     Hurrah!

*Erl.* A lie! No monarch honoured you by honouring us,  
 Or for that cursed statue gave commission;  
 No monarch with perception generous,  
 Appointed Tortenssen his Court Physician!  
 No royal sunlight on our labours shone—  
 You have been cheated, tricked, and played upon!

*All.* We have been cheated, tricked, and played upon?  
                     Oh, shame!

                    Who is the culprit? We've no time for trifling!  
 With choking indignation we are stifling!

*Enter DAME CORTLANDT in a towering rage, followed by SYNDIC, who tries in vain to appease her.*

*Dame.* The truth's revealed, the mystery dispelled—  
The culprit is—the Governor Griffenfeld!

He doesn't confine to lowly folks

His base barbarian dealings,

But dares to play his practical jokes

Upon my tenderest feelings!

Assuming that for you I glowed (*to SYNDIC*),

You Syndical mountebank, you!

He—(*symptoms of an approaching outbreak*).

*All.* Pray be careful or you'll explode!

*Dame (with an effort).* I'm keeping it under, thank you!

*All.* Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

She's keeping it under! thank you!

*Dame.* Henceforth I vow, with hate intense,

To crush that Governor pagan!

Whatever the cost, at my expense,

We'll go to Copenhagen.

There to the Regent we'll complain,

In volleys of vocal thunder—

[*Further symptoms of an outbreak.*]

*All.* Now steady, or you'll be off again!

*Dame (with an effort).* All right, I'm keeping it under!

*All.* Brava! Brava! Brava! Brava!

Dame Cortlandt's keeping it under!

*Enter GRIFFENFELD, NANNA, and THORA.*

*All.* Ah!

Here's the monkey undiscerning,

Who, all thought of mercy spurning,

Dares with men of light and learning

Thus to play the pranksome fool!

Launch at him our loudest thunder—

Tear him limb from limb asunder!

Long enough we've suffered under

His detested monkey-rule!

*Grif.* What means this uproar which my comfort shatters!

Explain, I beg! Are ye March hares, or hatters?

*Dame.* No madmen we—but matters not to mince,

To Copenhagen we depart,

With rage and fury in each heart,

To interview our sovereign Regent-Prince!

*Grif.* The Regent?

*All.* Aye, the Regent!

*Grif.* Not so loud.

Be pacified, I beg, excited crowd!

This state of indignation do not foment—

The Regent's here, in Elsinore, at this moment!

*All.* The Regent here!

*Grif, Nanna, and Thora.* In Elsinore at this moment!

TRIO.—GOVERNOR, NANNA, and THORA.

After a travelling troublesome,  
 Quit of the Court and the quality—  
 Weary of bolberry bubblesome—  
 Weary of party and polity,  
 Full of a jolly jocosity,  
 Out of the pale of propriety—  
 Hating the pride of pomposity—  
 Sick of that sort of society,  
 Regent is resting his brain  
 Here is our little domain! (repeat)  
 Seeking a time of tranquillity,  
 Free from all fear of formality,  
 Finds it in jolly gentility  
 Here in this lovely locality—  
 Doffing all duty and dignity  
 (Follies that fidget him fearfully),  
 Vows that our merry malignity  
 Favours his chirruping cheerfully—  
 Vows he'll again and again  
 Visit our little domain! (repeat)

All. Seeking a time of tranquillity, etc.

[GRIFFENFELD, NANNA, and THORA dancing through this.

Chorus. This is our chance to explain—  
 Tell of our sorrow and pain!

SEXTET.

ERLING, TORTENSSEN, SYNDIC, HAROLD, CHRISTINA, and DAME  
 CORFLANDT.

Har. This is our opportunity—  
 It may not come again.  
 Grif., Nanna, and Thora (in affected terror). No, no!  
 Er. To lay bare with impunity  
 Our misery and pain.  
 Grif., Nanna, and Thora (in affected terror). No, no!  
 Tort. We'll beg, with due severity,  
 His speedy punishment.  
 Grif., Nanna, and Thora (in affected terror). No, no!  
 The Six. And that with all celerity  
 To gaol he might be sent!  
 Grif., Nanna, and Thora (in affected terror). No, no!  
 No, no! not that; avert our doom!  
 Why it would be our ruin!  
 Can you resist when we assume  
 This attitude to sue in. (Kneeling—repeat.)  
 All. Yes, yes!  
 Ha, ha!  
 Yes, yes!  
 Ha, ha!  
 We can resist though you assume  
 That attitude to sue in!

*Laughing derisively at GRIFFENFELD and DAUGHTERS.*

Ha, ha! ha, ha! ha, ha! ha, ha!

*Grif. and Daughters (as if crying).* Ho, ho! ho, ho! &c.

*Grif.* Oh, pray have mercy! Do not pour  
Upon a hapless Governor,  
Who trades a rather devious path,  
The vials of your mighty wrath!

*Nanna and Thora.* Oh, pray you be magnanimous,  
'Twill ruin him and ruin us—  
In sheer good humour it was doae—  
Oh, haven't you any sense of fun?

*All Three.* Oh, haven't you any sense of fun?  
Oh, haven't you any sense of fun? (*pretending to cry.*)

*Thora.* Ah, don't be hard on one whose passion ruling  
Was, from his birth, a taste for April fooling!

*All Three.* Ah, don't be hard, &c.

*Erl. and Tor.* Go, traitress, go!  
Of such a foe  
I scorn the vain appeal.  
With rage I fume!  
Your father's doom  
This day the Prince shall seal.  
In vain you cry,  
And sob and sigh,  
In vain you kneel, I say!

*Grif., Nanna, } Oh, pity me, pity me, pity me, pity me,*  
*and Thora. } Pity me, pity me, pray!*

*Chorus.* Of all that's mean  
And vile, I ween,  
In an underhand way,

Epitome-pitome-pitome-pitome-pitome-pitome they!

ENSEMBLE.

*ALL (except GRIFFENFELD,  
NANNA, and THORA).*

*GRIFFENFELD, NANNA, and  
THORA (aside).*

Shall we endure this outrage,  
say?

Are we but toys to serve his  
whim?

Is he on heartstrings thus to play,  
As may, perchance, seem good  
to him?

When a Governor triumphs  
through quibble and quiddity,  
He may employ with a cheerful  
avidity,

Any amount of tol-lol-the-rol  
liddity,

Tol-the-rol, lol-the-rol, lol-the-  
rol-lay.

*All.* To the Regent, away!

*Grif., Nanna, } Tol-the-rol-the-rol-lay!*  
*and Thora. }*

*All.* To the Regent, away!

*Grif., Nanna, } Tol-the-rol-the-rol-lay!*  
*and Thora. }*

*All.* To the Regent—the Regent—the Regent, away!

*Grif., Nanna, and Thora.* } Tol-the-rol-the-rol, lol-the-rol, lol-the-rol-lay!

[*All rush off furiously, except CHRISTINA, who remains laughing up stage, and GRIFFENFELD, NANNA, and THORA, who sink, exhausted with laughter, on seat at foot of statue.*]

## ACT II.

SCENE.—*The Castle Court-yard.* ERLING, TORTENSSEN, SYNDIC, DAME CORTLANDT, CHRISTINA, and Chorus of men and girls discovered. A sentry is mounting guard on the Castle gate.

### OPENING CHORUS.

With anger stern  
And fierce determination,  
We wait to learn  
The fate of our appeal.  
To Regent just  
We've given information,  
And this, we trust,  
The tyrant's doom will seal.

*Erl.* This mite of a man who'll plot and plan  
To ruin us all for his delight—

*Tor.* The mannikin ape in human shape—

*Dame.* This tuppenny ha'penny lump of spite!

*All.* This tuppenny ha'penny, tuppenny ha'penny,  
Tuppenny ha'penny lump of spite!

CHRISTINA comes forward.

### RECIT.—CHRISTINA.

Be comforted—his downfall I foresee,  
All who exceed the bounds of strict simplicity,  
And, yielding to a taste for eccentricity,  
Fly in the face of orthodox morality,  
Must dearly pay for their originality—  
You know the story of the wilful bee?

*All (furiously).* We don't! We never heard it!

*Erl.*

Who was he?

SONG.—CHRISTINA. (*Guitar accompaniment.*)

A hive of bees, as I've heard say,  
Said to their Queen one sultry day—  
"Please, your Majesty's high position,  
The hive is full and the weather is warm.  
We rather think, with a due submission,  
The time has come when we ought to swarm?"  
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.  
Outspake their Queen, and thus spake she—  
"This is a matter that rests with me,  
Who dares opinions thus to form?  
I'll tell you when it is time to swarm!"  
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.  
Her Majesty wore an angry frown,  
In fact Her Majesty's foot was down—  
Her Majesty sulked—declined to sup—  
In short Her Majesty's back was up.  
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz,  
Her foot was down and her back was up!

That hive contained one obstinate bee  
(His name was Peter), and thus spake he—  
"Though every bee has shown white feather,  
To bow to fashion I am not prone—  
Why should a hive swarm all together?  
Surely a bee can swarm alone?"  
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz,  
Upside down and inside out,  
Backwards forwards round about,  
Twirling here and twisting there,  
Topsy turvily everywhere—  
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.  
Pitiful sight it was to see  
Respectable elderly high-class bee,  
Who kicked the beam at sixteen stone,  
Trying his best to swarm alone!  
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz,  
Trying his best to swarm alone!

The hive were shocked to see their chum  
(A strict teetotaller) teetotum—  
The Queen exclaimed, "How terrible, very!  
It's perfectly clear to all the throng  
Peter's been at the old brown sherry.  
Old brown sherry is much too strong—  
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.  
Of all who thus themselves degrade  
A stern example must be made,  
To Coventry go, you tipsy bee!"  
So off to Coventry town went he.  
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.



There, classed with all who misbehave,  
Both plausible rogue and noisome knave,  
In dismal dumps he lived to own  
The folly of trying to swarm alone !

Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.  
All came of trying to swarm alone.

*Chorus.*

All came of trying to, &c.

*Enter MATS MUNCK from Castle.*

*All.* Well, well—what news ?  
Does he refuse  
Our rightful dues ?  
What news—what news ?

*Mats.* Good news ! the Regent, whom we all revere,  
Will read your neatly drawn appeal—  
(I drew it !)  
Without an hour's delay he'll meet you here,  
And if we prove our case the Governor'll rue it !

*All.* Hurrah !

*Mats.* If these our charges home we bring,  
He swears the Governor's neck he'll wring ;  
And when he says he'll do a thing,  
He'll do it !

*All.* Hurrah !  
The sorrows that damped our lives are past,  
And happily all will end at last.  
As soon as the audience has been held,  
Good-bye to the Governor Griffenfeld !

*Men.* Good-bye !

*Girls.* Good-bye !

*Men.* Good-bye !

*Girls.* Good-bye !

*All.* Good-bye to the Governor Griffenfeld !

*Enter NANNA and THORA. They come forward humbly.*

*Erl. and Tort. (recit.).* Ah, false one !

*Thora.* With humbled head—in desperation dire—  
I tidings bring from my repentant sire.

He much regrets his foolish whim—

*Nanna.* And hopes you'll intercede for him ;  
For, though his gore at retraction rises,  
He's very sorry—and apologizes,

*Thora.* He can't say more—

*Both.* He's very sorry—and apologizes !

*Erl. and* Be comforted—I can't resist that tear !  
*Tor.* At once I'll seek our Sovereign Prince's ear,  
And tell him—though our future you destroy it—  
I don't mind ruination—I enjoy it !

*Enter GRIFFENFELD from Castle.*

*Grif. (humbly).* Complying with the popular request,  
So prettily expressed—

*Syn. (aside).* I drew it!

*Grif.* The Regent comes—forgive our little plot—  
Our penitence, do not  
Pooh pooh it!

*Nanna.* If still to press your grievance you agree,  
Then I feel certain we  
Shall rue it!

*Thora.* So please withdraw, as we are penitent,  
That well-worn document!

*Syn. (aside).* I drew it!

*All.* No, no; no mercy will we show—  
Away with you! you plead in vain!  
No word of ours shall stop the blow;  
Your prayer we will not entertain!

*Flourish. Enter REGENT.*

*Principals and Chorus.* Hail, O Regent Prince.  
Coming to requite us!  
Matters not to mince,  
You will nobly right us.  
Your disgust evince—  
Make the tyrant wince—  
Hail, O Sovereign Prince,  
Whose decrees delight us!

RECIT.—REGENT.

I've read your dutiful memorial:  
If any other for reprisals call,  
Or, suffering grievance, wish me to abate it,  
This is your opportunity to state it.

*Har. (recit.).* May it please your Highness!

AIR.

*Har.* Though we're eager for to sally  
To the doughty field of Mars—

*Soldiers.* May it please your Royal Highness!

*Har.* And encounter, generally,  
Any quantity of scars—

*Soldiers.* May it please your Royal Highness!

*Har.* Yet for mischief, principally,  
He has turned us into ballet,  
And we feel it personally—

It is rough on brave Hussars!

*Reg. • •* Yes, it's rough on brave Hussars!

*All.* Yes, you're right, your Royal Highness, it is rough on brave Hussars!

*Har.* If we urge, in accents courtly,  
That it wounds our proper pride—

*Soldiers.* May it please your Royal Highness!

IV.

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*Har.* Why, he answers as retortly,  
 And for mutiny we're tried—  
*Soldiers.* May it please your Royal Highness !  
*Har.* We are soldiers grave and portly,  
 And it aggravates us mort'ly,  
 For, to put the matter shortly,  
 Well, it is not dignified !  
*All.* No, it isn't dignified !  
*Reg.* No, it isn't dignified !  
*All.* Look at this, your Royal Highness—it is far from dignified !

## BALLET OF HUSSARS.

## SONG.—REGENT.

My people, who've submitted to the Governor's absurdities,  
 I sympathize most heartily with every word you say ;  
 His Excellency's conduct is too bad—upon my word it is—  
 But all his wrong I'll rectify without undue delay.  
 On Erling, who has suffered from his mischievous malignity,  
 We shed the sunny summer of our Sovereign benignity,  
 And ratify all promises of dollars and of dignity.  
 So consequently Nanna will be his this very day.  
*All.* So consequently Nanna will be his this very day.

## ENSEMBLE.

REGENT ( <i>aside to</i> GRIF.).	GRIF. ( <i>aside to</i> REGENT).	ERLING ( <i>aside</i> ).
Your orders I am trying to obey, I hope I don't exceed in any way ; For so nobly you array me, So magnificently pay me, That your orders I am anxious to obey.	My orders you implicitly obey, Proceed with perfect certainty you may ; Now unmercifully flay me, And with punishment dismay me, Or my orders you will surely disobey.	Oh, Nanna will be mine this very day, And all my sorrows hide themselves away ; For the trick he dared to play me, It will handsomely repay me, If Miss Nanna will be minethisvery day.

NANNA (*aside*).

It's fortunate that this is all in play.  
 I shouldn't like to marry him to-day ;  
 It would terrible dismay be,  
 If he really came to claim me,  
 It is lucky that's it's only said in play.

THORA, *Other Principals and Chorus.*

Oh, Nanna will be his this very day,  
 And all his sorrows hide themselves away ;  
 I will handsomely array me  
 In my very best to play me,  
 For Miss Nanna will be his this very day !

You, Tortenssen,—whom Griffenfeld with impudent audacity  
 Appointed our Physician—why, that gift is ratified  
 With promised rank of Baron—in that dignified capacity  
 He's warranted in claiming pretty Thora as his bride.  
 And Harold, gallant Corporal, whom with a spite oppressional,  
 Was made to twist and turn about like ballet-girl professional,  
 Dispensing with the many intermediate steps progressional,  
 A Colonel he's created at one mighty giant stride!  
*All.* A Colonel he's created at one mighty giant stride.

ENSEMBLE.

REGENT ( <i>aside to</i> GRIF.).	GRIF. ( <i>aside to</i> REGENT).	HAROLD and TOR- TENSSSEN.
I trust your Excel- lency's satisfied, To carry out your wishes I have tried— If I haven't acted rightly You will mention it politely, But I trust your Ex- cellency's satis- fied.	So far, my Excel- lency's satisfied, To carry out my wishes you have tried; When you fail to do it rightly I will mention it politely, But, so far, my Excel- lency's satisfied.	Upon my word, I'm truly gratified, To justify your choice will be my pride; For I think you've chosen rightly, And I thank you most politely, For, upon my word, I'm truly grati- fied.

THORA (*aside*).

If he thinks that I intend to be his  
 bride,  
 He'll find it a mistake unqualified,  
 If I know my feelings rightly,  
 I will thank him most politely,  
 And decline, on any terms, to be  
 his bride.

*Other Principals and Chorus.*

Upon my word, we're truly grati-  
 fied,  
 To justify your choice will be  
 their pride;  
 For we think you've chosen  
 rightly,  
 And we thank you most politely,  
 For, upon my word, we're truly  
 gratified.

And now for Governor Griffenfeld—we highly to extol you meant,  
 But, finding you're addicted to discreditable pranks,  
 We strip you of your dignity, position, and emolument,  
 And name Mats Muuck as Governor—we don't want any thanks.  
 And, as in these proceedings we are banded all in unity,  
 I think we couldn't find a more convenient opportunity  
 Of proving that imposture can't be practised with impunity.  
 (*To GRIFFENFELD.*)  
 For all your impositions you're degraded to the ranks!  
*All.* For all his impositions he's degraded to the ranks!

## ENSEMBLE.

REG. ( <i>aside to GRIF.</i> ).	GRIF. ( <i>aside to REG.</i> ).	SYNDIC.
I think I have done exactly as you said,	You've done it pretty nearly as I've said,	Now really this is like to turn my head,
I am sure I hope I haven't been misled ;	If you hadn't you'd have sacrificed your head.	For I'm to rule as Governor instead !
When I receive my payments,	You shall now receive your payment,	When I get my quarter's payment,
I'll surrender all this raiment,	So take off that handsome raiment,	I'll buy all his left-off raiment,
And resume my old habiliments instead.	And resume your old habiliments instead.	And it's possible Dame Cortlandt I may wed.

NANNA and THORA (*aside to each other*).

Did you hear what that audacious fellow said ?

My goodness, how exceedingly ill-bred !

Let us give the man his payment,

Then he'll doff his splendid raiment,

And resume his own habiliments instead.

*Reg.*

Now all you men and maidens true,

Who troth have duly plighted—  
(I understand you're not a few)

Your wrongs shall all be righted :

At his expense a banquet to

You're cordially invited.

And in the Castle Chapel you

This day shall be united !

*All.*

(*all dancing*)

Hurrah !  
Oh, bright delight—go, find a priest !

The wedding and the wedding feast,

At your expense, will soon be held—

So thank you, Private Griffenfeld !

Ha, ha, ha, ha, etc.

At your expense they will be held,  
Three cheers for Private Griffenfeld !

*All.*

*Grif.*

*All.*

*Griff.*

*All.*

So thank you—

Thank you—

Thank you—

Thank you—

Thank you, Private Griffenfeld !

[*All dance off in couples, except GRIFFENFELD and REGENT.*]

*Reg.* (*changing his manner—very humbly*). I trust I've fairly carried out your Excellency's instructions?

*Grif.* You've done pretty well, sir—only pretty well!

*Reg.* May I ask in what respect I have failed?

*Grif.* Your manner is not sufficiently dignified for a Royal Prince—you want a great deal more of this sort of thing—(*business*)—you are not at all Royal, sir!

*Reg.* I see what you mean. (*Imitating him.*) Thank you, I'm sure—it will be most useful to me in my profession, and I'll take care to remember it. But pray bear in mind that, as a poor stroller, I have not enjoyed your Excellency's many opportunities of making myself acquainted with the deportment of the very highest classes.

*Grif.* True, but I told you this afternoon that you must endeavour to assume an air of—of this sort of thing—(*business*). Then again, your instructions were to order me to be shot in twenty-four hours. Why didn't you do that?

*Reg.* Well, I was about to give the order, but when I saw the temper of the people and how cordially you are detested—most unjustly, I'm sure—I was afraid to do so lest, in their fury, they should execute the order on the spot.

*Grif.* I see what you mean.

*Reg.* I might not have had time to stop them.

*Grif.* Very true.

*Reg.* But it's not too late—they can be sent for directly and the order given, without delay. (*About to go off.*)

*Grif.* No—on second thoughts it's not necessary. It will do as it is.

*Reg.* I trust you think I exercised a wise discretion?

*Grif.* Well, on the whole, perhaps yes, I say—it's—it's a good joke, isn't it?

*Reg.* It's a perfect monument of practical humour. Only—forgive the suggestion—isn't it a little risky?

*Grif.* Risky? What do you mean?

*Reg.* Somehow these practical jokes have such a tendency to recoil on the heads of their perpetrators. Now, mere verbal humour is so much safer—a quip, a crank, a jibe, a jape or jest—

*Grif.* Nonsense, sir, don't talk to me about japes and jests! Return to the Castle, and when you've resumed your rags, I will pay you the golden Freidrichs I promised you. Be off!

*Reg.* As your Excellency pleases.

[*Exit REGENT into Castle.*]

*Grif.* What does he mean about practical jokes recoiling on their perpetrator? I ought to know. I've played them with

impunity for five-and-forty years! It's all very well to talk about verbal humour, but where is it to come from? Why, everything of the kind has been said—there's absolutely nothing left!

SONG.—GRIFFENFELD.

Quixotic is his enterprise, and hopeless his adventure is,  
 Who seeks for jocularities that haven't yet been said;  
 The world has joked incessantly for over fifty centuries,  
 And every joke that's possible has long ago been made.  
 I started as a humourist with lots of mental fizziness,  
 But humour is a drug which it's the fashion to abuse;  
 For my stock in trade, my fixtures, and the goodwill of the business  
 No reasonable offer I am likely to refuse.  
     And if anybody choose  
     He may circulate the news  
 That no reasonable offer I am likely to refuse.

Oh happy was that humourist—the first that made a pun at all—  
 Who when a joke occurred to him, however poor and mean,  
 Was absolutely certain that it never had been done at all—  
 How popular at dinners must that humourist have been!  
 Oh the days when some stepfather for the query held a handle out,  
 The door-mat from the scraper, is it distant very far?  
 And when no one knew where Moses was when Aaron put the  
     candle out,  
 And no one had discovered that a door could be a-jar!  
     But your modern hearers are  
     In their tastes particular,  
 And they sneer if you inform them that a door can be a-jar!

In search of quip and quiddity I've sat all day, alone, apart—  
 And all that I could hit on as a problem was—to find  
 Analogy between a scrag of mutton and a Bony-part,  
 Which offers slight employment to the speculative mind:  
 For you cannot call it very good, however great your charity—  
 It's not the sort of humour that is greeted with a shout—  
 And I've come to the conclusion that the mine of jocularities,  
 In present Anno Domini, is worked completely out!  
     Though the notion you may scout,  
     I can prove beyond a doubt  
 That the mine of jocularities is utterly worked out!

[Exit into Castle.

*Enter HAROLD (now dressed as Colonel) followed by BLANCA.*

*Har.* Now, don't worry me—I can't attend to you now. I've the responsibility of a Regiment on my shoulders, and I've no time to listen to chatterboxes. If you've anything to say, mention it to the Sergeant-Major.

*Blan.* The Sergeant-Major? Oh, very good—only if I tell

the Sergeant-Major what I was going to tell *you*, the Sergeant-Major'll do something affectionate, that's all. [*Going.*]

*Har.* Stop! Now you are not going to say anything to the Sergeant-Major that will unsettle him and make him neglect his duties?

*Blan.* Only his Regimental duties. Not the others.

*Har.* Oh! It would be a pity to unsettle the Sergeant-Major. Well, what was it you were going to say?

*Blan.* (*nestling up against him*). Only this, dear—that this sudden rise—dear—from corporal to colonel at one step—dear—is more like fiction than fact, isn't it, dear?

*Har.* Is that all? Cut out the "dears," and I don't think it'll hurt him. But, as you say, it *is* remarkable.

*Blan.* What a novel it would make!

*Har.* A three-volume novel! So it would. Let's write it together.

*Blan.* Very well—you begin.

*Har.* Now, let me see—

DUET.—HAROLD and BLANCA.

*Har.* There once was a corporal bold—

*Blan.* Yes—gawky, round-shouldered and lean—

*Har.* No, very good-looking with plenty of dash,  
In battle courageous, hot-headed and rash,  
With a small but extremely becoming moustache—

*Blan.* Ah! it isn't the one that I mean.

*Har.* (*speaks*). Now it's your turn.

*Blan.* There was once a Vivandière—

*Har.* Old,

Snort, stumpy, red-headed and vain—

*Blan.* Not at all—very young with no sort of defect,  
Exceedingly lovely and highly correct.

*Har.* Oh, don't make her pretty—these girls, recollect,  
Are always remarkably plain!

*Blan.* (*speaking*). Rather rude, isn't it?

*Har.* Not a bit. True to life—that's all. Now we must have an incident.

*Blan.* Suppose we make her— (*Whispers.*)

*Har.* No—Mud'ie wouldn't take it. No, I don't think that would do. Stop, I have an idea for a sensational incident of a striking and dramatic character.

The Regent one morning, by chance,

Observing the Corporal, said—

"It would be nothing short of public disgrace

To keep such a trump in a Corporal's place—

So we'll make him a Colonel, all covered with lace."



*Blan.* (*confidentially to audience*). The Regent was weak in the head!

*Har.* She, taking the facts at a glance,  
To his bosom unblushingly flew—

*Blan.* And he was so deeply in love, I declare.  
That he married her then, and he married her there—

*Both.* So it ends with a wedding at Hanover Square,  
As a three volume novel should do!

[*Exeunt together.*]

*Enter MATS MUNCK, now dressed in GRIFFENFELD'S uniform.*

*Mats.* When a man is promoted unexpectedly to a position of the highest official distinction, it is always a satisfactory circumstance when his figure is calculated to set off his uniform to advantage. (*Sentry presents arms to him.*) Eh? Oh, thank you very much. You're extremely polite, I'm sure!

*Sent.* Please to remember the sentry.

*Mats.* Eh? Oh, certainly!

[*Gives him money.*]

*Enter DAME CORTLANDT unobserved. She comes forward.*

*Dame C.* (*putting her arm round him*). Mats! Little man!

*Mats.* Eh? Oh, it's you. Don't. I'm busy now. (*Aside.*) It was all very well when I was only a Syndic, but as a Governor I can look a good deal higher than this sort of person. (*Aloud, to sentry.*) Will you kindly do that again?

*Sent.* Certainly.

[*Presents arms.*]

*Mats.* Most gratifying, I'm sure! (*Tips him again.* *DAME again embraces MATS.*) Now, don't worry—can't you see that I have business with a gentleman?

[*Reverts to sentry.*]

*Dame C.* (*suppressing her rage with difficulty*). Mats! Take care! This is strange treatment—at the very outset of our engagement!

*Mats.* But, my good soul, you speak of our engagement as if—

*Dame C.* Don't deny it, Mats. I have your letter of proposal in my pocket—you have my letter of acceptance in yours! I'm trying to keep it down, Mats.

*Mats.* But as you very properly observed, that wasn't addressed to me but to the ex-Governor.

*Dame C.* It does just as well for you, Mats. I accepted the Governor, and you *are* the Governor.

*Mats.* If it comes to that, you were proposed to by the Syndic, and I'm not the Syndic. Go find the Syndic—go seek, go find—there's a good girl! (*Reverts to sentry.*) Will you oblige me once more?

[*Giving him money.*]

*Dame C. (heaving with suppressed rage).* I'm doing my best to subdue it, Mats, but it's a tremendous effort.

*Mats.* Hold your breath and count six, my dear.

*Dame C. (does so).* It's all right, dear—it's down again!

*Mats. (occupied with sentry).* So glad!

*Dame C.* We must settle this at once, Mats. It's a very nice point. Shall we refer it to arbitration?

*Mats.* By all means. I find this gentleman (*indicating sentry*) full of delicate appreciation—suppose we leave it to him?

*Dame C.* You will undertake to abide by the result, Mats?

*Mats.* With pleasure. (*Aside.*) I've tipped him till he doesn't know whether he stands on his head or his heels!

QUARTET.

MATS MUNCK, DAME CORTLANDT, SENTRY, and *afterwards*  
GRIFFENFELD.

*Mats (to SENTRY).* One day, the Syndic of this town

(Whose time of life is shady)

Affectionately kneeling down,

Proposed to this old lady.

Now your opinion give politely

And riddle me this and riddle me rightly—

Who claims her hand? (*Aside.*) Here's half-a-crown!

[*Tipping him.*]

*Sent.* No doubt the Syndic of this town.

*Mats (dancing).* Exactly so—the truth you speak—

(*To DAME*). Away—your love-sick Syndic seek—

You have no claim upon me, for

Unhappily I'm the Governor!

*Sent.* Oh yes, he is the Governor!

*Mats (delighted)* There!

*Sent.* No doubt he is the Governor!

*Mats.* There!

*Sent.* Against you, ma'am, I must declare—

This gentleman is the Governor!

There!

*Mats.* But bless my soul—

*Dame.* The man is right!

*Mats.* 'That's not the whole—

*Dame.* It's settled quite!

ENSEMBLE.

DAME.

MATS.

It's now *my* turn my wrongs to  
air,  
So Governor Munck for squalls  
prepare!

I've taken steps the Court to  
square,  
So fire away, ma'am—I don't  
care!

[During the Ensemble a corporal's guard enters—the sentry is relieved, and GRIFFENFELD, now dressed as a private Hussar, is left in his place. The change is not noticed by the DAME or MATS.]

Dame. One moment, pray—your words retrace,  
Oh, sentinel, shortsighted!  
I to the Governor of this place,  
My troth securely plighted—  
Now pray don't treat this question lightly,  
But riddle me this and riddle me rightly—  
Who claims my conjugal embrace?  
Grif. Of course, the Governor of this place!  
Dame. (dancing). Exactly so! you well decide!  
I am, ha! ha! the Governor's bride—  
The Governor you, you can't deny—  
Argal, the Governor's lady, I!  
Grif. She is the Governor's lady!  
Mats. What!  
Grif. Of course, the Governor's lady!  
Mats. What!  
Grif. You are the Governor, are you not?  
Then she's the Governor's lady!  
Mats. What!  
But bless my heart—  
Dame. (still dancing). That man is right!  
That's but a part—  
Dame. It's settled quite!

## ENSEMBLE.

DAME.	MATS.	GRIFF. (aside).
Though basely you	If I consent, may I be	How capitally I plan
may plan and plot,	shot,	and plot
With me you'll share	With her to share my	To cleverly cut the
your Governor's lot!	Governor's lot!	Gordian knot!

[DAME dances off in front of MATS, who tries in vain to escape.]

Grif. (alone). It's alright! they're both committed to it, and that little difficulty is off my hands at last! Hallo! what's wrong now?

Enter NANNA and THORA tidying their caps and much out of temper.

Thora. Papa, a joke's a joke,—but I don't think it fair to make us plot against ourselves!

Nanna. I'm sure I enjoy a bit of fun as much as anybody, but when it comes to our being coupled, if only for an afternoon, with a brace of penniless admirers, who are disposed to take every advantage of the position in which they temporarily find themselves, why, it's going a little too far—that's all!

*Grif.* Why, what have they been doing?

*Thora.* Why, they've been unnecessarily realistic in their attentions.

*Grif.* Unpleasantly so?

*Thora.* I said unnecessarily so. Goodness knows, I don't mind realism when there's any prospect of its coming to anything definite, but as neither of these young men has a penny, the sooner it's put a stop to the better!

*Grif.* Hasn't a penny! What are you talking about? Why, they're magnificent matches!—Court Physician with the rank of Baron!—Sculptor Extraordinary to the Royal Family with the title of Count! Why, you grasping girls, what more do you want?

*Nanna.* Oh, papa! that's all nonsense! If these persons were really what they believe themselves to be, we wouldn't mind, but as they're both penniless young men, and we are penniless young ladies, the sooner we tell them the truth, the better.

*Grif.* But, my good girls, consider! Don't go and spoil it all! Think of the fun of it when they discover how they've been cheated! Oh, my dear girls, there's a rich and rare treat in store for us all!

*[The girls, who have been chuckling through his speech, burst into hearty laughter.]*

*Thora.* Upon my word, it ought to be extremely amusing!

#### PATTER TRIO.

GOVERNOR, NANNA, and THORA.

*Grif.* When a gentleman supposes that he comfortably dozes on a pleasant bed of roses (which are singularly rare)—

*Nanna.* And discovers that it bristles with uncomfortable thistles, in intemperate epistles his annoyance he'll declare—

*Thora.* When a man his temper loses his remarks he never chooses, but expressive language uses, with a tendency to swear—

*Grif.* And when lovers are discarded their upbraiding will be larded with some epithets unguarded—you had better not be there!

*Nanna (disappointed).* We had better not be there?

*Thora (disappointed).* We had better not be there?

*Grif. (decidedly).* You had better not be there!

*All.*       ••       We } had better not be there!  
                          You }

*Nanna and Thora.* When these gentlemen conceited both discover they've been cheated, all our fun will be defeated—that's a thing we couldn't bear—

So, however they may rave it, we'll unquestionably brave it; you may take your affidavit we will certainly be there!

We } will certainly be there—  
 They }  
 We } will certainly be there—  
 They }

Though { you } flout it, never doubt it, { we }  
 I } will certainly be there!

*Grif.* Their despair and their distraction and their keen dissatisfaction—their exaggerated action, and the tearing of their hair—

*Nanna.* Their disgust and desperation when they see the situation some congenial occupation for the lawyers will prepare—

*Thora.* We shall find their loud abusing both instructive and amusing, and of violent accusing there'll be symptoms in the air—

*Grif.* And their libellous expressions and their angry indiscretions will be tried at Quarter Sessions, when I occupy the chair!

*Nanna (gleefully).* When you occupy the chair—

*Thora (gleefully).* When you occupy the chair—

*Grif.* When I occupy the chair!

*All Three.* When { you } occupy the chair.  
 I }

*Grif.* When the case is quite completed, then the prisoner defeated with severity is treated as you're probably aware—

For it's awfully provided that the jury shall be guided by my summary one-sided—which distresses Labouchere.

*All Three.* It is rough on Labouchere—

It is hard on Labouchere—

Oh, the dickens, how it sickens tender-hearted Labouchere!

[*Exit GRIFFENFELD.*]

*Nanna.* Really, Thora, I can't help feeling rather conscience-stricken. Poor boys! I'm really afraid we've broken their hearts!

*Thora.* It's a pity they're such nobodies. I sometimes think between ourselves—

*Nanna.* Hush! So do I—but here they come.

*Enter ERLING and TORTENSSEN. The girls retire up stage and listen.*

*Tort.* Do you know, I don't care to be repulsed by a girl I'm engaged to, Count.

*Erl.* They certainly treated us very coldly, Baron. Mere innocent attentions—such as every girl expects from the man she's going to marry—

*Tort.* Remember, Count, we are no longer a couple of adventurers, we are great men, and we are entitled to expect that attentions shall be paid to us, now. (*Girls indulge in suppressed chuckles.*) I think a little condescension on our part, a

little stand-offishness, an air of doing them a considerable favour, would not be misplaced.

Erl. I see what you mean, Baron. A little of this sort of thing—"Good-day to you, my dear; good-day to you. Pleased to see you, pleased to see you——"

Tort. "A little further off, please. We'll tell you when we want the mixture as before." Don't you think so, Count?

Erl. I really think it's only what is due to us, Baron, I do indeed. [*The Girls come forward pretending to weep bitterly.*]

Nanna (*in affected tears*). Oh, please, we've been thinking it over, and we're very sorry we were so un-kuk-kuk-kuk-kind to you just now.

Erl. (*condescendingly*). Thank you, thank you. Pray don't name it.

Tort. We thought you'd like a little attention—but it's not of the smallest consequence. There—go away—there's good girls.

Thora (*pretending to sob*). Oh, but we *did* like it—only—

[*Bursts into tears.*]

Nanna (*sobbing*). We thought it more mai-mai-maidenly to be cuc-cuc-cuc-coy!

[*Tears.*]

Nanna. By such a par-par-particular pa-pa-papa!

Thora. And we're so afraid of Mrs. Gug-gug-gug-Grundy!  
(*Violent burst of tears.*) [*Both burst into floods of tears.*]

TOGETHER. { Erl. Now, my darling child—Nanna—dearest—don't cry like that! I can't bear it! See, on my knees I swear to you that I will always—always love you as I love you now! Oh, don't cry like that—you'll break my heart—indeed you will!

Tort. My dearest Thora—you mustn't—really you mustn't! It's dreadful to see those pretty eyes so red with weeping—Oh, I was a brute to be unkind to you, there—don't be a little goose! I didn't mean it—upon my word I didn't!

[*Both men are on their knees trying to console the two girls. The girls, who have been pretending to weep hysterically through this, suddenly burst into peals of hearty laughter.*]

Erl. (*springing up*). Tortenssen, I do believe they're laughing at us!

Thora. Oh, aren't the nobility shrewd!

Nanna. And isn't the aristocracy quick at grasping a situation!

## DANCING QUARTET.

ERLING, TORTENSSEN, NANNA, and THORA.

- Nanna.* So this is how you'd have us sue you—  
Bowling, bending—turning to you—  
But you don't exact it, do you?  
That's so kind (*ERLING kisses her*). Imper-  
tinence! (*aside*).
- Thora.* Pleading party pray you pity!  
You are wise and wondrous witty—  
Den't despise our doleful ditty!  
Thanks so much (*TORTENSSEN kisses her*).  
What impudence! (*aside*).
- Erl. and Tort.* Ha, ha! ha, ha! Ha! ha! ha! ha!  
*Nanna and Thora.* Ha, ha! ha, ha! Ha! ha! ha! ha!
- All.* Topsey turvey turn the tables!  
Tit for tat and tat for tit—  
As in sussy fairy fables,  
Badly is the biter bit!  
Takes a time to tame a Tartar!  
Dad's delightful darling darter,  
Mostly makes a man a martyr—  
Here's a hero hardly hit!
- Erl.* As you sue for pardon sweetly  
Though you've acted indiscreetly,  
We forgive you both completely,  
Thus I'll prove it—(*tries to kiss her*).  
That you won't!
- Nanna.* Though you've ridiculed us sadly—  
*Tort.* Cheated and deceived us badly,  
As we love you fondly—madly—  
We forgive you—(*trying to kiss her*).  
No, you don't!
- Thora.* Topsey turvey turn the tables, &c.  
[ERLING and TORTENSSEN dance off—waving an adieu  
to the two girls, who remain on the stage.]

*Thora (sighing).* Oh, Nanna, they're good fellows! I wish it was all real!

*Nanna.* No use wishing, dear. We'd better try and forget all about them. (*Looking off.*) Oh—look! All the people coming to get married!

*Thora.* Poor people! We—we must go and find our bridegrooms.

*Nanna.* Poor bridegrooms? It's—it's a capital joke! (*About to cry.*)

*Thora.* Capital! (*Looking at NANNA's face.*) Why, a real tear, I do believe!

*Nanna (holding it on her finger).* Yes, it's real this time.

*Thora (examining it).* Funny, isn't it?

*Nanna.* Very amusing.

*Thora.* Put it back. (*NANNA does so.*) All right now?

*Nanna* (*brightly*). All right now!

[*Exeunt in opposite directions.*]

# MARCH.

*Enter men and girls in couples for wedding. They come two and two down stage.*

CHORUS. (*To bell accompaniment.*)

Ring the bells and bang the brasses!

Cut the cake and fill the glasses!

Lovers and their blushing lasses

Will be duly coupled soon.

When, in Castle chapel plighted,

Man and maid are once united,

Off they'll go in mood delighted

On a happy honeymoon!

*Enter GRIFFENFELD, also NANNA with ERLING, THORA with TORTENSSEN, DAME CORTLANDT with SYNDIC, and CHRISTINA alone.*

*Grif.* Stop! You can all go home. There will be no weddings to-day.

*Erl.* What do you mean?

*Grif.* I mean that you've all been imposed upon—deluded—cheated. The Regent is no Regent, but a common vagabond personating him. Ha! ha! ha! Here comes His Royal Highness in his true colours!

*Enter REGENT in his vagabond dress. CHRISTINA runs to his arms.*

*Erl.* (*to REGENT*). Now, sir, the truth. Are you a prince to be worshipped or a swindler to be whipped?

*Reg.* Really it's a point upon which I'm not quite satisfied myself! I'll think it over and let you know.

*Enter the two OFFICERS.*

*1st Officer* (*kneeling*). Sir, the enemy's fleet has entered the Baltic, and your immediate presence at Copenhagen is indispensable. [*Giving a dispatch to REGENT.*]

*Grif.* Why, what's all this? Who are these jack-a-dandies?

*Reg.* (*reading dispatch*). Merely two of my trusted officers. They bring me weighty news indeed!



*Grif.* Why, you don't mean to tell me that you are the Regent after all?

*Reg.* The very Regent, at your service. [*All kneel.*]

*Grif.* I've made an ass of myself!

*Reg.* Don't say that. We are indebted to you for some invaluable hints for promotions, appointments, and marriage arrangements, all of which will take effect to-day—as indeed will the best and wisest of your suggestions—your permanent degradation to the ranks. (*REGENT sees CHRISTINA weeping.*) Why, Christina in tears! <sup>b</sup>

*Chris.* I weep, sir, because my heart is broken, and, alas, it is your Highness's doing, for your Highness gave me Nils Egilsson, and he has gone from me for ever!

*Reg.* Nay, Christina, be not so sure of that. I have found the very love I have sought this many a year, and if my being heir to a crown is to stand in my way, why I'll e'en be Nils Egilsson to the end!

*Chris. (amazed).* Sir!

*Reg.* Come, Christina, what say you?

*Chris.* Sir, I am your Highness's handmaid!

*[They retire up stage together.]*

## FINALE.

*Erl. and Tort.*      Now all that we've agreed upon, O,  
                                 And all that's passed between us ;  
                                 Ere half an hour go by  
                                 We'll surely ratify.

*Nanna and Thora.* As life's career we speed upon, O,  
So fondly we'll demean us ;  
Thy love shall never say  
That he repents this day.

*Erl. and Tort.*      What, never?

*Nanna and Thora.* Never!

*Erl. and Tort.* Never?

*Nanna and Thora.* Never!

**All Four. Never repent this day !**

My own { Nanna.  
Thora.

*Nanna and Thora.* But only think  
Of poor papa,  
Position low  
Degraded to!

[Pointing to GRIFFENFELD, who is standing sentry.

*Erl. and Tort.* (to GRIFFENFELD). You little roguey poguey, you—

*Syn.* You little roguery poguery—

Grif. (hurt). Sir!

*Har.* You little roguey poguey—

*Grif.* Sir !!

*All.* You roguey poguey, roguey poguey, roguey poguey !

*Grif.* Sir !!!

*All.*

We love with all sincerity, O,  
And pleasure is elating us—

Away with all celerity, O,  
The priest is there awaiting us !

In verity, verity, verity, verity,  
Priest is there awaiting us !

[*All except REGENT and CHRISTINA dance off in couples into Castle, waving an adieu to GRIFFENFELD, who stands as sentry, presenting arms to them as the curtain falls.*



# "HASTE TO THE WEDDING."

*AN OPERETTA.*

WRITTEN BY W. S. GILBERT.  
COMPOSED BY GEORGE GROSSMITH.

*Produced at the Criterion Theatre, London, on  
Wednesday, July 27th, 1892.*

(This piece is original only as far as regards its musical setting.  
The plot is a very free adaptation of "Le Chapeau de Paille  
d'Italie.")

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

WOODPECKER TAPPING (*a Bridegroom*).

MR. MAGUIRE (*a Market Gardener*).

UNCLE BOPADDY.

COUSIN FOODLE.

THE DUKE OF TURNIPTOPSHIRE (*an Emotional Peer*).

MAJOR-GENERAL BUNTHUNDER.

CRIPPS (*a Milliner's Bookkeeper*).

WILKINSON (*a Policeman*).

BARNS (*a Family Retainer*).

JACKSON (*a Valet*).

THE MARCHIONESS OF MARKET HARBOROUGH (*an Emotional Peeress*).

LADY POPTON.

MARIA (*a Bride*).

BELLA CRACKENTHORPE (*a Milliner*).

PATTY PARKER (*a Lady's Maid*).

*Wedding Guests and Members of the Upper Aristocracy.*

# HASTE TO THE WEDDING."

## ACT I

SCENE.—*Room in Mr. WOODPECKER TAPPING'S house. Door c. Doors R. and L. JACKSON discovered dusting chairs. Enter PATTY on tip-toe.*

*Patty.* Is it all right, Mr. Jackson?

*Jackson.* All is right, Patty. [Kisses her.]

*Pat.* Now none of that, if you please. Your master, Mr. Woodpecker Tapping, is to be married to-day, and you told me I might come and see the wedding presents. Where are they?

*Jack.* In the next room—you shall see them presently.

*Pat.* But how comes it that the wedding takes place from the bridegroom's house, and why are all the wedding presents sent there?

*Jack.* Because the bride, Miss Maria Maguire, lives at Petty-twiddllm, in a remote corner of Wales—and as Mr. Tapping can't get leave to go down to a remote corner of Wales, a remote corner of Wales has to come to him.

DUET.—JACKSON and PATTY.

*Jack.*

To-day at eleven,  
Young Woodpecker Tapping  
Will enter the heaven  
Of matrimonee—

To 'Ria Maguire  
That beauty entrapping  
Woodpecker Esquire  
United will be.

(Dancing.) And the bells they will jingle, !  
The wine it will bubble,  
As Woodpecker, single,  
Turned Woodpecker double,  
Reforming his ways, which are rather too free,  
Walks into the heaven of matrimonee !

*Pat.* Young Woodpecker Tapping  
 (Professed lady-killer)  
 Is rarely caught napping  
 By widow or maid,  
 But her fascinations—  
 Her gold and her siller—  
 All considerations  
 Have thrown in the shade.

(*Dancing.*) So the bells they will jingle,  
 The wine it will bubble,  
 As Woodpecker, single,  
 Turned Woodpecker double,  
 Reforming his ways, which are rather too free,  
 Walks into the heaven of matrimonee.

*Enter* UNCLE BOPADDY, *who catches them dancing. They stop abruptly when they see him. He is very deaf, and carries a band-box.*

*Bopaddy.* Don't mind me—it's only Uncle Bopaddy—nobody minds Uncle Bopaddy! Anybody come yet?

*Jack. (with great show of deference).* Not yet, you ridiculous old rag-bag! Not yet, you concentrated essence of disreputable senility.

*Pat. (aside to JACKSON).* Hush! hush! you'll make the old gentleman angry.

*Jack.* Oh, no—he's as deaf as a post—he can't hear. (*Shouting to him.*) You can't hear, can you? (*To PATTY.*) I always talk to him like that; it amuses me very much. (*To BOPADDY, who is much struck with PATTY.*) Don't you think that at your age you might find something better to do than to go about chucking young girls under the chin, you disreputable old vagabond?

*Bo.* Yes, yes—you are perfectly right. I told him so myself; but, bless you, you might as well talk to a post! (*To PATTY.*) Here, my dear, take this (*giving her parcel*). It's a little present for the bride—now, don't crush it, there's a nice little gal!

*Pat.* All right, old sixpennorth of halfpence!

*Bo. (much amused).* Yes—you're quite right. I often do so myself. Ha, ha! (*Exit PATTY with parcel.*) What a nice little gal! Very nice little gal! Don't know that I ever saw a nicer little gal!

*Jack.* Go along, you wicked old pantaloon, you ought to be ashamed of yourself, at your age! (*Gives him a chair.*) There, sit down and hold your wicked old tongue! [*Exit JACKSON.*]

*Bo. (sits).* Thankee kindly. Remarkably civil, well-spoken young man, to be sure! Don't know that I ever met a nicer-spoken young man.

*Enter WOODPECKER TAPPING.*

*Wood.* Well, here's a pretty piece of business.

*Bo.* My nephew—my dear nephew (*shaking his hand*). Where's the wedding party—have they arrived?

*Wood.* They're coming—in eight cabs. But listen to my adventure. I was riding in Hyde Park just now, and I accidentally dropped my whip—

*Bo.* (*shaking his hand*). My boy, those sentiments do honour to your head and your heart.

*Wood.* What sentiments? Oh, I forgot—he's deaf. No matter. Well, I dismounted and picked it up, and then discovered that the noble animal had bolted, and was at that moment half a mile away.

*Bo.* But I go farther than that. I go so far as to say that a good husband makes a good wife.

*Wood.* Here's an old donkey!

*Bo.* Thank you, my boy, I am—I always was.

*Wood.* Well, after a long run I came up with my spirited grey, and found him in the act of devouring a Leghorn hat belonging to a young and lovely lady who was indulging in an affectionate *tête-à-tête* with a military gentleman who may or may not have been her betrothed. I jumped on my horse—apologized to the lady, threw her a sovereign (or it might have been a shilling—I'm sure I don't know), and this is all the change I got out of it (*showing the remains of a straw-hat*).

*Bo.* Dear me, that's a very nice straw—a very nice straw! I don't know that I ever saw a nicer straw! Ha! now that's very curious.

*Wood.* Eh?

*Bo.* Nothing. It's curious—it's a coincidence. It's just like the one I've given Maria for a wedding present. Hah! At what time is the wedding?

*Wood.* Eleven (*shows him on fingers*).

*Bo.* Eh?

*Wood.* Eleven! (*shouting*).

*Bo.* You must speak a great deal louder—I can't hear.

*Wood.* Eleven (*whispering*).

*Bo.* Oh! eleven. Why didn't you say so at first? (*Looking at watch*.) Half-past ten—just time for a glass of sherry. I saw it on the sideboard as I came up—you'll find me at the sideboard as you go down. [*Exit BOBADDY.*]

*Wood.* So in one hour I shall be a married man! Married to the daughter of a human porcupine—one of the most ill-tempered, crotchety, exacting old market-gardeners in Great



Britain! Maria is a charming girl—she has only one drawback—a cousin, Alfred Foodle, who was brought up with her. He kisses her. It's permitted in some families. It's permitted in hers. I don't quite see why—he's as big as I am. The best of it is, *I'm* not allowed to. Of course it's all right, because they were brought up together. At the same time, I wish he wouldn't.

SONG.—WOODPECKER.

Maria is simple and chaste—  
 She's pretty and tender and modest—  
 But on one or two matters of taste  
 Her views are distinctly the oddest.  
 Her virtue is something sublime—  
 No kissing—on that there's a stopper—  
 When I try, she says, "All in good time—  
 At present it's highly improper."  
 Such virtue heroic I call,  
 To complain were the act of a noodle—  
 She's allowed to kiss no one at all  
 But her cousin—her cousin: young Foodle;  
 Now a maiden could never offend  
 By embracing her father or brother;  
 But I never could quite comprehend  
 Why cousins should kiss one another.  
 Of course it's an innocent whim—  
 Beneath it no mischief lies hidden.  
 But why is that given to him  
 Which to me is so strictly forbidden?  
 It's as innocent as it can be;  
 He's a kind of performing French poodle.  
 But why withhold kisses from me  
 Which are freely accorded to Foodle?

*Enter CAPTAIN BAPP and LEONORA.*

Wood. Who's this?

Bapp. This is the scoundrel's house, and (*seeing WOODPECKER*) this is the scoundrel!

Wood. Confusion! It's the lady of the Leghorn hat and her military admirer!

Leo. Dear Captain Bapp, be careful!

Bapp. Leonora, leave this to me. (*To WOODPECKER.*) Well, sir, suppose you offer this lady a seat! (*WOODPECKER gives LEONORA a chair, and is about to take another.*) Don't sit down yourself, sir! How dare you attempt to sit down in this lady's presence? Now, sir, to business. You have grossly insulted this lady.

Wood. How?

*Bapp.* In the first place, you devoured this lady's hat.

*Wood.* Pardon me—my horse devoured her hat.

*Bapp.* A quibble, sir; you are responsible for his action. You devoured this lady's hat; and you then have the audacity to throw her this contemptible coin as compensation!

[*Showing WOODPECKER a shilling.*]

*Wood. (aside).* It was a shilling! I thought it was.  
(*Aloud.*) Sir, it was a mistake—allow me to rectify it.

[*Gives him a sovereign.*]

*Bapp.* Fire and fury! what's this?

*Wood.* That is a sovereign—or pound—for the hat.

*Bapp.* Insult upon insult! We have not come here for compensation.

*Wood.* Then, what the deuce have you come for?

*Bapp.* In the first place, an apology.

*Leo.* No, no; I forgive him! Come away—it's not necessary.

*Bapp.* Leonora, will you leave this to me? Well, sir, the apology.

*Wood.* Well, sir, I apologize.

*Bapp.* Unreservedly?

*Wood.* Unreservedly. Now, what is the moral of all this, Leonora?

*Leo.* Sir!

*Bapp.* By the God of War——!

*Wood.* I call you Leonora because I don't know your other name. The moral of this is—if you will walk out in Hyde Park with surreptitious captains in the Army——

*Leo.* Sir, you are in error. This gentleman is my cousin. We were brought up together.

*Wood.* Oh, I see; he's your Foodle.

*Bapp.* This lady's *what*, sir?

*Wood.* Her Foodle. I say you're her Foodle. You don't know what I mean; but you may depend upon it you are. I wish you'd go.

*Bapp.* Oh, but I haven't done yet. This hat, sir, is a present from the lady's husband.

*Wood.* What! There's a husband, is there? Oh, Leonora, I should have expected this from Bapp, but I'm surprised at *you*.

*Leo.* My husband is the most jealous man in the world, and if I go home without it, he'll kill me. There's only one thing to be done—you must get another exactly like it.

*Wood.* With pleasure—to-morrow.

*Bapp.* To-morrow! And what's to become of the lady in the mean time?

*Leo.* Oh, I'll remain here (*sits*).

*Wood.* Here!—in my house? On my wedding-day? Impossible!

*Mag. (without).* Woodpecker!

*Wood.* The wedding-party have arrived, and do *not* suppose that that is a bull of Bashan. No—it is my father-in-law elect! (*Shouts.*) Coming! (*To LEONORA.*) Stop—I see a way of doing it. I'll invent an excuse to call at a milliner's on the way to the Registrar's, and tell her to send one here.

*Mag. (without).* Woodpecker!

*Wood.* Coming! (*To BAPP.*) Will that do?

*Bapp. (to LEONORA).* Will that do?

*Leo. (to BAPP):* That will do.

*Bapp. (to WOODPECKER).* That will do.

*Maguire. (furiously).* Woodpecker!

*Wood.* He's coming up—he mustn't find you here. Go in there—quick! (*Places BAPP in room R. and LEONORA in room L.*) Just in time!

[*Music, "Haste to the Wedding." Enter the wedding party, composed of semi-grotesque old-fashioned and countrified couples. They dance round the stage. MARIA, in bridal dress, dances on with FOODLE, a loutish simpleton; BOPADDY follows, and finally MAGUIRE in a towering rage.*

CHORUS.—EPITHALAMIUM.

Ring, ye joy-bells, long and loudly,  
Happy hearts together tied—  
Bridegroom's heart is swelling proudly  
As he takes his blushing bride!

*Mag. (furiously).* It's off! It's off!

*Wood.* What's off?

*Mag.* The wedding! I won't have it!

SONG.—MAGUIRE.

You've kept us all waiting outside!  
Such insults I never foresaw:  
You've insulted your beautiful bride—  
You've insulted your father-in-law!  
You've insulted our excellent guests—  
You've pooh-poohed the connubial knot—  
You've insulted the flymen  
Who'd drive you to Hymen—  
By George, you've insulted the lot!  
Yes, yes, yes,  
By George you've insulted the lot!  
It's off! Her affection's misplaced!  
It's off! such a man I disown!

*All,*

It's off! take your arm from her waist!

It's off! let the lady alone!

And your beautiful bride, who belongs

To a father who never ignores

Insults by the dozen,

Shall marry her cousin—

Here, Foodle, be happy—she's yours!

All.

Yes, yes, yes,

Here, Foodle, be happy—she's yours!

[MARIA goes weeping to FOODLE, who embraces her.

CHORUS.

Ring, ye joybells, long and loudly,

Happy hearts together tied—

Bridegroom's breast is swelling proudly

As he takes his blushing bride!

Wood. St! st! st! Suppose I apologize.

Mag. Then it's on again.

Wood. Then I apologize.

Mag. (joyfully). It's on again! (To FOODLE, who is embracing MARIA.) Foodle, my boy, it's on again!

Food. (releasing her). Oh, Maria!

[MARIA reverts to WOODPECKER.

CHORUS.

Ring, ye joybells, long and loudly,

Happy hearts together tied—

Bridegroom's breast is swelling proudly

As he takes his blushing bride!

Maria. Oh! (screams).

Mag. What's the matter!

Maria. Oh, something's pricking me!

Wood. A pin? Allow me (proceeds to remove it).

Mag. (stopping him). How dare you, sir!

Maria. How dare you!

All. For shame!

Mag. Foodles, remove the pin! (FOODLE crosses to MARIA and removes the pin from Maria's back, kisses it, and pricks his lips accidentally.) They were brought up together (addressing WOODPECKER, who is furious). Now then, are we all ready? Then away we go!

[Music commences "Haste to the Wedding," the guests are dancing off.

Wood. Stop! (Music and guests stop short—aside.) I must find some excuse to stop at a milliner's—what shall I say? I can't tell them I've got to stop and buy a hat for one lady on my way to be married to another!

*Mag.* (who, like the others, has been standing on one leg in the exact attitude in which he was stopped). Nearly finished your soliloquy, Woodpecker?

*Wood.* (aside). Ha, I know! (Aloud.) Hullo! It's very awkward—I've lost the licence!

*Mag.* What!

*All.* Lost the licence!

*Mag.* It's off! Another instance of insulting neglect! It's off! Foodle shall have her! [Hands her to FOODLE.

*Food.* (embracing her). Maria!

CHORUS.

Ring, ye joybells—

*Wood.* Stop! Don't be absurd—it's very easily rectified. We must call at Doctor's Commons on the way to the church, and get another. You can remain below in the cabs while I apply for it. (Aside.) They're all country people, and don't know the difference between Doctor's Commons and a milliner's shop! (Aloud.) Will that do?

*Mag.* It's on again! (To FOODLE, who is embracing MARIA.) Foodle, my boy, it's on again!

CHORUS.

Ring, ye joybells—

*Mag.* Will you stop that? Foodle, take the bride—pair off and away we go!

[Music "*Haste to the Wedding.*" All dance off, WOODPECKER last.

*Wood.* If ever I marry again, it shall be into a family without a Foodle! [Exit, after the others.

SCENE II.—*A Milliner's Show-room. Some bonnets and two common milliners' dolls' heads on table up L. High desk with ledger B. Wide opening C., with doors.*

Enter BELLA CRACKENTHORPE.

*Bella* (calling off). Now, make haste, young ladies—attend to your work and don't chatter. Upon my life I've been very fortunate! I only purchased this business four months ago, and I've quite a large connection already! Ah! it's not everywhere that civility and punctuality, combined with the latest

Paris fashions, are to be obtained at a moderate advance on Store prices.

BALLAD.—BELLA.

By dreams of ample profits lured,  
And overflowing till,  
By easy payments I secured  
Stock, fixtures, and goodwill.  
But fixtures are but means to end,  
Goodwill's a term misplaced,  
Unless with them you deftly blend .  
Politeness and Good Taste.  
Without you, money paid is waste,  
So hail, Politeness and Good Taste !

Without your calm unpurchased aid,  
Work hardly as one may,  
The finest business in the trade  
Falls off and fades away.  
The stock depreciates in tone,  
The goodwill dwindles fast,  
The humble fixtures, they alone  
Are faithful to the last !  
Ye fixtures, though but means to ends,  
You do your best, my humble friends !

*Enter WOODPECKER (in breathless haste).*

Wood. I want a hat of finest straw,  
At once—a handsome one.  
Trimmed with an armadillo's claw,  
Three truffles and a bun,  
Two thingummies of peacock blue,  
A what's-its-name on each,  
A snuff-box and a cockatoo,  
Two mackerel and a peach.  
If you have such a thing in stock,  
I'll buy it—(*looking at watch*) half-past ten o'clock !

RECIT.

Bella (*recognizing him*). Ah, heavens ! 'Tis Woodpecker ! Oh  
judge and juries !  
Wood. (*aghast*). 'Tis Bella Crackenthorpe, by all the furies !  
(*aloud*). You've nothing like it in your shop ?  
No consequence ; good morning !  
Bella (*holding his coat-tails*). Stop !  
Ah, false one ! (WOODPECKER *much depressed*.)

BALLAD.—BELLA.

You offer to take me, one fine day  
To the Naval Exhibition ;  
You borrow the money from me to pay  
The price of our admission.

"HASTE TO THE WEDDING."

The rain pours down on my brand-new dress,  
 And boots of thin prunella.  
 Do you stand me a hansom? Oh dear, no!  
 You stand me under a portico,  
 Like a shabby young fellow, and off you go  
 To borrow a friend's umbrella!

The rain goes on, and the days they grow—  
 To months accumulating;  
 And patiently under that portico  
 They find me waiting—waiting.  
 To her allegiance staunch and true  
 Stands your deserted Bella.  
 At length six weary months have passed;  
 The weather, no longer overcast,  
 Clears up—and you return at last  
 Without that friend's umbrella!

*Wood.* I forgot the umbrella. I'll go and fetch it. [*Going.*  
*Bella (stops him).* Not if I know it!

*Wood. (aside).* Confound it! And the wedding party at the door, in eight cabs!

*Bella.* To think that this contemptible creature actually promised to marry me!

*Wood.* Marry you? Why, of course I did! Marry you? Certainly I will!

*Bella.* You will?

*Wood.* Why, of course! What do you take me for?

*Bella.* And you didn't desert me in order to run after somebody else?

*Wood.* Ha, ha! As if I'd dream of anybody else!

*Bella.* Oh, what a relief! Oh, Woodpecker! [*In his arms.*

*Wood.* Now, then; I want a Leghorn hat trimmed with a parrot's head, an armadillo's claw, two mackerel, one peach, three truffles, and a bun.

*Bella (jealous).* Oh, for some young lady, I suppose?

*Wood.* For some young lady! That's very likely; come, you know me better than that. No; it's for a Captain in the Guards, who wants it as a birthday present for—for his Colonel.

*Bella.* Well, by an odd coincidence, I believe I happen to have the very thing; and you shall have it on one condition: that we dine together at Simpson's this afternoon—

*Wood. (aside).* Very likely!

*Bella.* And that you take me to the Adelphi Theatre this evening!

*Wood.* Capital! excellent idea! I was just saying to myself

as I came in, "What in the world shall I do with myself this evening?" and the Adelphi Theatre is the very thing. Now, then, where's the hat?

*Bella.* In the next room. Come along, and don't let me catch you making eyes at the young ladies! [*Exit BELLA.*]

*Wood.* (*in despair.*) Here's all the wedding party coming upstairs!

[*Music, "Haste to the Wedding." Enter MAGUIRE, MARIA, FOODLE, BOPADDY, and the wedding party, two and two, dancing round the stage. The guests range themselves on the left of the scene.*]

*Mag.* So here we are in Doctor's Commons! (*To WOOD-PECKER.*) I think you told us this was Doctor's Commons?

*Wood.* Yes, yes—but why in the world have you left your cabs?

*Mag.* Never mind that—have you got the licence?

*Wood.* No—the—the Registrar has not arrived yet; that is, he's busy. Go back to your cabs and I'll go and fetch him. Oh, dim! dim! dim! [*Exit hurriedly after BELLA.*]

*Mag.* It's all right—it is Doctor's Commons. My friends, let us behave ourselves, we are in Doctor's Commons. Let those who have gloves put them on. I—I am much agitated; and you, my child?

*Maria.* Papa, the pin is still there!

*Mag.* Walk about, my child, and it will work down. (*Goes to desk.*) Here is the entry-book. We shall all have to sign our names in it.

*Maria.* Papa, what are they going to do to me?

*Mag.* Nothing, my child. The Registrar will say to you, "Do your parents consent to this marriage?" and you'll reply, "I am." (*Looking off.*) Oh, the Registrar is coming. (*To FOODLE, who has only got one glove on.*) Put on your other glove, will you?

*Foodle.* I can't—I've lost it!

*Mag.* Then put your hand in your pocket. (*FOODLE puts the gloved hand in his pocket.*) Not that one, stupid! the other one! (*FOODLE does so.*) Now, then, prepare to receive the Registrar!

*Enter CRIPPS, out of breath and wet through.*

AIR.—CRIPPS and CHORUS,

*Cripps.* Gracious, how I have been running,  
Backwards, forwards, in the rain—  
Impetuous clients dunning;  
All my trouble, too, in vain!



"HASTE TO THE WEDDING."

*Chorus.* Bow to the Registrar !  
                   He can the licence grant—  
                   He is the man we want—  
 Bow to the Registrar ! (*All bow to CRIPPS.*)

*Cripps.* Sitting in wet things is odious,  
                   Rheumatiz my nature loathes ;  
 So, behind this desk commodious,  
                   I'll at once change all my clothes !

*Chorus.* This is the Registrar !  
                   He can the licence grant—  
                   He is the man we want—  
 Bow to the Registrar !

[*In the meantime, CRIPPS has dived under the desk and is concealed from view.*]

RECIT.

*Mag.* Why, where's he gone ? He's disappeared from view !  
                   Hallo, you sir ! Hallo ! [*Craning over desk.*]

*Cripps (showing his head only).* Good day to you !

*Mag.* This is my daughter, sir.

*Cripps.* One moment, pray,

*Mag.* These are her bridesmaids—this her bridal day !

*Cripps (aside).* No doubt a wedding party, come to make  
                   Some purchases !

*Mag.* Our names, perhaps, you'll take ?

[*CRIPPS, who has taken off his coat, puts it on again, and prepares to take their names.*]

*Mag.* My name is Anthony Hurricane Egg,  
                   Bartholomew Capperboy Property Skegg—  
                   I haven't done yet—Conolly Maguire—

*Cripps.* But really—

*Mag.* I haven't quite finished—Esquire !

*CHORUS (rising from their seats, and dancing up to the Registrar and back again).*

His name is Anthony Hurricane Egg, &c.

[*All sit down suddenly.*]

*Cripps (speaking).* Sir, the Christian names are immaterial.

*Mag.* Oh ! (*Sings*)

Oh, I was born at Pettybun  
 On a Saturday—on a Saturday—

*Cripps (speaking).* Your place of birth is also immaterial.

*Mag.* Oh ! (*Sings*)

In eighteen hundred twenty-one,  
 On the fourth of May—on the fourth of May—

*Cripps (angrily).* My dear sir, I don't want your biography  
 —you have told me quite enough !

*Mag.* Very good. (*To BOPADDY.*) Now it's your turn. (*Loudly.*) Now it's your turn. (*In a whisper.*) Now it's your turn.

*Bo.* Oh!—my turn (*advancing with dignity*). Sir (*to CRIPPS*), before I consent to become a witness in this matter—

*All* (*bursting into chorus*). On a Saturday—on a Saturday!

*Bo.* I should like to express my views as to the qualifications of a witness—

*All* (*as before*). On the fourth of May—on the fourth of May!

*Cripps.* What is he talking about?

*Bo.* In the first place he should be of full age. I am. In the second, he should be a Briton by birth. I am. In the third—

*All.* Oh, he was born at Pettybun,  
On the fourth of May—on the fourth of May,  
In eighteen hundred twenty-one,  
On a Saturday—on a Saturday!

[*All sit suddenly.*]

*Food.* (*looking off R.*) Oh, uncle, uncle! look here!

[*During the dialogue that follows BOPADDY has been much fascinated with the two milliners' dolls' heads, flirting first with one, then with the other, as if unable to make up his mind which of them he prefers.*]

*Mag.* What! my son-in-law elect kissing a young woman! It's off! It's off! Foodle, my daughter is yours!

*Food.* Maria! [*Putting his arms round her.*]

*Enter WOODPECKER C. from R.*

*Wood.* Why in the world haven't you gone back to your cabs?

*Mag.* Sir, it's off! It's off!

*Wood.* Very good.

*Mag.* You ought to be ashamed of yourself!

*Wood.* I am. What have I done?

*Mag.* You dare to ask that when I saw you through that door with a young woman in your arms!

*Wood.* (*aside*). He saw me! (*Aloud.*) I admit it, sir!

*Maria* (*crying*). He owns to it!

*All* (*crying*). He owns to it!

*Food.* My darling! [*Embracing MARIA.*]

*Wood.* Will you stop that hugging?

*Food.* She's my cousin—we were brought up together.

*Mag.* It's quite allowable—she's his cousin.

Wood. His cousin? Oh, then, the lady I was embracing is my cousin!

All. Oh indeed—that's quite another matter!

Mag. It's on again! Foodle, my boy, it's on again!

Food. (*relinquishing MARIA*). Old testotum!

Mag. Introduce me to your cousin—I'll invite her to the wedding.

Wood. (*aside*). Bella at Maria's wedding! (*Aloud*). It's of no use—she can't come—she's in mourning.

Mag. What, in a pink dress?

Wood. Yes—it's for her husband.

Mag. (*convinced*). Oh. Well, we're quite ready, sir, when you are (*to CRIPPS*). [*All sit in a row opposite desk.*]

Wood. What are they doing?

Cripps. I really must make a complete change. I'll go into the next room—there's no one there.

[*Going towards door with his dry clothes under his arm.*]

Mag. Where are you going?

Cripps. I shall catch my death of cold if I don't—I really can't help it—you must excuse me. [*Exit door R.*]

Mag. My friends, let us follow the Registrar!

[*Music. They all dance after CRIPPS in couples, BOPADDY last, with one of the doll's heads, and kissing his hand to the other.*]

Wood. Where the deuce are they all going?

*Enter BELLA C. from R.*

Bella. Here's your specimen (*giving remains of hat*). I'm very sorry, but I can't match it.

Wood. What!

Bella. If you like to wait three weeks I can get you one from Florence.

Wood. Three weeks!

Bella. I only know of one like it in London.

Wood. I buy it—mind, I buy it.

Bella. Impossible! I sold it a week ago to—

Wood. To whom?

Bella. To the Marchioness of Market Harborough!

[*Exit BELLA.*]

Wood. This is pleasant! A Marchioness! I can't call on a Marchioness and ask her how much she wants for her hat!

*Enter CRIPPS R., with his dry clothes under his arm, pursued by the wedding party dancing as before; BOPADDY last, with*

*the doll's head. They exeunt after CRIPPS L. Music forte while they are on—pianissimo when they are off.*

Wood. Hi! Mr. Maguire, where are you going?  
[Is about to follow.]

*Enter JACKSON.*

Jackson. Sir, I've just come from home.

Wood. Well, is the Captain there still?

Jack. Yes, he's there, but he ain't still. The lady has fainted, and can't leave the house.

Wood. Wrap her up in a blanket and send her home at once!  
(Exit JACKSON.) I must have this hat at any rate. (Refers to Blue Book.) The Marchioness of Market Harborough—Carlton Gardens. I'll get married first, and then I'll call on her. But what shall I do with the wedding party? I know. I'll shut 'em up in the Duke of York's Column. I'll say to the keeper, "I engage this Column for twenty-four hours—let no one out."  
[Exit.]

*Enter CRIPPS from L., with his dry clothes, very breathless.*

Cripps. Why the deuce do the people follow me everywhere? It's impossible for me to change my clothes!

*Enter all the wedding party as before. Music forte. CRIPPS runs round stage and off, followed by wedding party. BOPADDY last, with the doll's head. He is much exhausted with running.*

## ACT II.

SCENE—*A handsomely furnished front and back drawing-room in Carlton Gardens. The two rooms separated by handsome double curtains which are closed during the early part of the Act. A sumptuous luncheon is laid on the table in back-room, but concealed from audience by curtains. Doors R. and L. Window up stage L. Small table R. with vase and bouquet. Grand piano L.C.*

*Enter BARNS, an old family retainer.*

Barns (announcing). The Duke of Turniptopshire!

*Enter DUKE. Exit BARNS.*

Duke. Admirable! Magnificent! What gorgeous decorations! What refined taste! What have we here? (Looks

through curtains.) A most luxurious cold collation! Seven-and-sixpence a head, if it cost a penny! I wonder if (*looking around him*) there's no one coming—I wonder if I might venture to take just one tartlet! I will—

[*Takes a tartlet from table and eats it.*]

*Enters the MARCHIONESS OF MARKET HARBOROUGH.*

*March.* Well, Duke.

*Duke.* Marchioness (*embarrassed, with his mouthful*)—I—I—delighted to see you.

*March.* (*more in sorrow than in anger*). Ah, Duke, Duke—you've been picking the luncheon again! Now that's too bad!

*Duke.* I'm sorry—very, very sorry. Forgive me, it was thoughtless—criminal if you will, but I was ever a wayward child, accustomed to have his every whim gratified, and now, in middle age, I find it difficult to shake off the shackles that custom and education have riveted on me. [*In tears.*]

*March.* (*in tears*). You were my late husband's early friend!

*Duke* (*with an effort*). And now, my dear Marchioness, whom do you expect at your concert this morning? Tell me all—do not fear—you can trust me implicitly!

*March.* I feel I can! Well, then, there's Lord and Lady Popton, the Duke and Duchess of Deal, Colonel Coketown, the Dowager Duchess of Worthing, Lord and Lady Pentwhistle, and the Archbishop of Bayswater.

*Duke* (*aside*). All dem snobs! (*Aloud.*) And who sings?

*March.* The most delightful creature in the world—no other than the distinguished falsetto, Nisnardi, who arrived only a week ago from Bologna, and who has already turned all the crowned heads of Europe! He can go up to G!

*Duke.* Gad bless me, what a gift!

*March.* You have no idea how deliciously eccentric he is.

*Duke.* Well, you know, a man who can touch an upper G is not like us common fellers: he's a genius—a genius.

*March.* Exactly. I asked him to sing two songs this afternoon, and sent him a cheque for 3000 guineas; here is his reply: (*reads*), "Madam, you ask me to sing two songs. I will sing three; you offer me 3000 guineas—it is not enough——"

*Duke.* Dem foreigner!

*March.* "It is not enough; my terms are—a flower from your bouquet!"

*Duke.* A what?

*March.* "A flower from your bouquet!" Is it not romantic?

*Duke.* It's a poem—a "ballade!" Pardon this weakness!

[*Wiping his eyes.*]

*March.* Dear, dear Duke! (*Wiping her eyes.*) You know the Princess Polpetti—with the pretty feet?

*Duke.* I know her pretty feet.

*March.* What do you think were his terms for singing at her concert?

*Duke.* I don't know. He seems fond of flowers—perhaps a pot of mignonette?

*March.* Nothing of the kind—one of her old slippers!

*Duke (in tears).* Don't—dennne, I can't stand it—I can't, indeed!

*March.* What tenderness—what sympathy! (*Pressing his hand.*) You were my late husband's early friend! (*Noise and carriage heard.*) Here are my guests, and I've been crying! I mustn't be seen in this state! Duke, oblige me by receiving them—I'll be down in one minute. [*Exit MARCHIONESS.*]

*Duke (takes out snuff-box, opens it as if about to take snuff, produces powder-puff, and powders his face to remove traces of tears).* Why am I cursed with this tremulous sensitiveness? Why are my heartstrings the sport and toy of every wave of sympathetic second-hand sentiment? Ah! ye small tradesmen and other Members of Parliament, who think rump steak and talk bottled beer, I would give ten years of my life to experience, for one brief day, the joy of being a commonplace man!

SONG.—DUKE.

Oh butcher, oh baker, oh candlestick-maker,  
 Oh vendors of bacca and snuff—  
 And you, licensed vittler, and public-house skittler,  
 And all who sell sticky sweet-stuff—  
 Ye barbers, and Messrs. the Bond Street hair-dressers  
 (Some shave you, and others do not)—  
 Ye greasy porkpie-men—ye second-hand flymen—  
 All people who envy my lot (*taking up tambourine*),  
 Let each of you lift up his voice—  
 With tabor and cymbal rejoice  
 That you're not, by some horrible fluke,  
 A highly-strung sensitive Duke!  
 An over-devotional,  
 Super-emotional,  
 Hyper-chimerical,  
 Extra-hysterical,  
 Wildly-aesthetical,

Highly-strung sensitive Duke!

You men of small dealings, of course you've your feelings—  
 There's no doubt at all about that—  
 When a dentist exacting your tooth is extracting,  
 You howl like an aristocrat,

"HASTE TO THE WEDDING."

But an orphan cock-sparrow, who thrills to the marrow

A Duke who is doubly refined

Would never turn paler a petty retailer

Or stagger a middle-class mind!

So each of you lift up your voice—

With cymbal and tabor rejoice, &c.

*[Dances to tambourine accompaniment.]*

*Enter* BARNs.

*Barns.* Your Grace, a gentleman is below who desires to speak with her ladyship.

*Duke (seizing him by the throat, with startling energy).* His name—his name! Do not deceive me, varlet, or I'll throttle you!

*Barns.* I have known your Grace, man and boy, these eighteen months, and I have never told you a lie yet. The gentleman declines to give his name, but he says that he wrote to her ladyship this morning.

*Duke.* It is he—the falsetto—the supreme Nisnardi! Show him up, and treat him with the utmost courtesy. He can touch an upper G!

*Barns.* An upper G! Gad bless me, what a gift!

*[Exit in amazement.]*

*Enter* WOODPECKER *timidly.*

*Wood (mistaking the DUKE for a servant).* I say—Chawles, come here, my man. Half-a-crown for you. *(Gives him money.)* Now then, just give this note to her ladyship *(gives him a note)*, there's a good fellow.

*Duke (pocketing the coin).* In one moment; the Marchioness will be here directly. In the meantime, permit me to introduce myself—the Duke of Turniptopshire!

*Wood.* The what!

*Duke.* The Duke—

*Wood.* Go on, you're joking!

*Duke.* Not at all—observe—*(Twirls round and postures.)* Are you convinced?

*Wood.* I am! *(Aside.)* And I took him for a flunkey! I've given a live Duke half-a-crown—and I'm going to ask a live Marchioness how much she wants for her hat! I shall never be able to do it!

*Duke (aside).* He speaks English very well, but he's clearly an Italian, he has such a rummy waistcoat. I'll draw him out a bit. *(Aloud.)* Princess—pretty feet—old slippers—ah, you dog!

Wood (*puzzled*). Pretty feet?

Duke. Yes, pretty feet—pretty little tootsicums! I've heard all about it, you see.

Wood (*aside*). The upper circles appear to have a method of expressing themselves which is entirely and absolutely their own. (*Aloud.*) Could I see the Marchioness?

Duke. Yes, I'll send word to her. Ha! ha! (*with deep meaning*). Songs—old slippers—flower from a bouquet—three thousand guineas! My dear sir, you're delicious—you're simply delicious! [*Exit DUKE R.*]

Wood. It's quite clear to me that I shall never be equal to the intellectual pressure of aristocratic conversation. So I'm married at last—really and truly married. On leaving Bella's, we started for the Church—Maria and I were made one—and now if I can only get the hat from the Marchioness, everything will end happily. (*Looking out of window.*) There's the wedding party—in eight cabs—waiting patiently until I come down. I told them—ha! ha!—that this was the Piccadilly Hotel, and that I would go up and make arrangements for the wedding breakfast! And they believe it! I hear the Marchioness. I hope she got my note.

*Enter MARCHIONESS R. She approaches him melodramatically.*

March. Stop—don't move! Let me gaze upon you until I have drunk you in. Oh! thank you. (*WOODPECKER, much astonished exhibits symptoms of nervousness—buttoning his coat, putting on his hat and taking it off again.*) Ah, you are cold—cold—cold! You are unaccustomed to the rigour of our detestable climate.

Wood. As you say, it's a beast of a climate—

March. Ah, sir, I can offer you an hospitable welcome and an appreciative company, but I cannot—alas! I cannot offer you an Italian sky!

Wood. Pray don't name it—it's not of the least consequence. (*Aside.*) I never shall understand the aristocracy!

March. Ah, Bella Italia! It's a lovely country!

Wood. It is a dooced lovely country! Oh, I beg pardon!

March. What a wealth of Southern emphasis! What Italian fervour of expression!

Wood. I—I did myself the honour of writing a note to your ladyship—

March. A most delightful note, and one that I shall always carry about me as long as I live.

Wood. Thank you. (*Aside.*) She's very polite. (*Aloud.*) In that note I ventured to ask you to grant me a slight favour.



*March.* Oh, of course—how extremely dull of me! Well, you shall have what you want.

*Wood.* Really?

*March.* Really—though you're a bold bad man!

[*Turns to bouquet.*]

*Wood.* At last, at last the hat is mine! I wonder how much she wants for it. Shall I beat her down? No, no, you can't beat down a marchioness! She shall have her price.

*March.* (*giving him a flower*). There is the flower you asked for—bold bad man!

*Wood.* A flower? There's some mistake—I want an article of attire.

*March.* An article of attire?

*Wood.* Yes; didn't you get my note?

*March.* Yes, here it is. [*Taking note from her bosom.*]  
"My terms are—a flower from your bouquet—Nisnardi."

*Wood.* Nisnardi? What's that?

*March.* Hush, eccentric creature—my guests are arriving.

*Enter BARNES.*

*Barnes* (*announcing*). Lord and Lady Popton, Colonel Coketown, the Marquis of Barnsbury, Lady Pentwistle, the Archbishop of Bayswater, and the Duke and Duchess of Deal.

[*Exit door.*]

*Enter LORD and LADY POPTON, COLONEL COKETOWN,  
and other guests.*

*March.* My dear Duke—my dear Lady Popton—allow me to present to you the incomparable Nisnardi!

[*All bow reverentially to WOODPECKER.*]

*Lady P.* (*crossing to him*). And are you really Nisnardi?

*Wood* (*aside*). I must brazen it out. (*Aloud.*) I am.

*Lady P.* Incomparable falsettist!

*Wood.* (*aside*). Good heavens, I'm a singer—a falsettist! Why, I'm a bad baritone!

*Lady P.* And are you really about to favour us with a specimen of your marvellous talent?

*March.* Signor Nisnardi is most kindly going to sing three songs.

*All.* { How delightful!  
Charming!  
What a treat!

*Wood.* (*aside*). I must get out of this fix at once. (*Aloud.*) Marchioness, I have a most extraordinary and—I am afraid you will say—unreasonable request to make.

*March.* Oh, name it !

*Wood.* But it's a secret !

*March.* Oh, I'm sure our friends will excuse us.

[*Guests bow, and exeunt R. and L.*]

*Wood.* Marchioness, I am the slave of impulse !

*March.* I know you are.

*Wood.* Eh? Oh! Well, it's a most remarkable thing, but when a whim enters my head, I lose my voice until it is gratified. A whim has just entered my head, and listen ! [*Grunt.*]

*March.* Heavens, what is to be done ?

DUET.—WOODPECKER and MARCHIONESS.

<i>Wood.</i>	The slave of impulse I, Born 'neath the azure sky, Of beautiful Firenze. With fierce desires I brim. When I conceive a whim, That whim becomes a frenzy ! A wish ungratified, Wounds my Italian pride, Like stab of sharp stiletto. My blood is turned to gall ; I cannot sing—I squall, And, this is worst of all— Away goes my falsetto, My exquisite falsetto !
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MARCH. (*aside*).

WOOD.

Oh, heavens ! should it befall, My guests it will appal, If, when assembled all— Away goes his falsetto ! His exquisite falsetto !	My blood is turned to gall, I cannot sing, I squall, And, this is worst of all— Away goes my falsetto, My exquisite falsetto !
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*March.* Lord of the Upper G,  
By peers of high degree  
Assiduously courted ;  
Falsettist all divine,  
No heaven-sent whim of thine  
Ought ever to be thwarted.  
Society should strain  
Each nerve to spare thee pain,  
Whatever's on the tapis ;  
The impulse I admire  
That's born of Southern fire :  
I know what you require—  
Here—take it, and be happy !  
(*Takes off her shoe and gives it to him.*)

"HASTE TO THE WEDDING."

MARCH. (*hopping*).

WOODPECKER (*puzzled*).

The impulse I admire  
That's born of Southern fire ;  
I know what you require—  
So take it, and be happy !

Although I much desire  
A part of your attire,  
That's not what I require—  
*That will not make me happy !*

Wood. But this is not what I want.

March. (*hopping*). You said it was an article of my attire.

Wood. Yes—but—it's the other end !

March. The other end ? [*Still hopping.*]

Wood. You wear a straw hat.

March. I was—I mean I do—

Wood. It is for that straw hat that I have conceived this  
indescribable longing ! Is it not a mad idea ?

March. Mad ? Not a bit—most reasonable. I understand  
perfectly—you want it as a *pendant* to the slipper.

Wood (*aside*). The aristocratic mind seems to go about in  
slippers !

March. You shall have it at once, oh divine creature !

[*Exit MARCHIONESS, hopping off.*]

Wood. In two minutes the hat will be mine, and then I must  
be off before they have time to discover the imposture. I'll tell  
Maguire that they've no private room to spare at the Piccadilly  
Hotel. I wonder how the old boy is by this time (*goes to  
window*). There are the cabs—eight of them ! Ha ! ha ! I  
can almost hear him growl !

*Enter MAGUIRE through curtains, rather tipsy, with a bottle  
of champagne in one hand and a glass in the other. WOODPECKER  
is leaning out of the window.*

RECIT.

Maguire. Now, Woodpecker ! until you come, my dear sir,

We cannot budge a peg !

Wood. Why, what the dickens are you doing here, sir ?

Explain yourself, I beg !

SONG.—MAGUIRE.

Why, we're all making merry  
On port and on sherry.  
It's liberal, very—

At price you don't sti-hickle !

When you spoke of our fooding,  
Thinks I, he's allooding  
To chops and a pooding,

Bread, cheese, and a pi-hickle—

All,very good things though they certainly be,  
But that's not the *menoo* at the Piccadillee.

Why, bless us, there's dishes  
Of fowls and of fishes—  
Of all that's delishes—

There's muckle and mi-hickle!  
There's puddings and ices,  
And jambong in slices—  
And other devices

Our palates to ti-tickle!  
Fine Frenchified fixings—delicious they be—  
But they do the thing well at the Piccadillee.

CHORUS (*within*).

There's puddings and ices,  
And jambong in slices—  
And other devices

Our palates to tickle!  
Fine Frenchified fixings—delicious they be—  
But they do the thing well at the Piccadillee.

Wood. Here's a pleasant state of things! We shall be kicked out—given into custody—a honeymoon in Holloway Jail!

*Enter MARCHIONESS still hopping.*

March. Well, have they brought you the hat?

Wood. (*trying to hide MAGUIRE*). Not yet, my lady. If you would kindly ask them to hurry a little——

March. (*seeing MAGUIRE*). Who is this nobleman?

Wood. That nobleman? Oh, this nobleman is a nobleman who always accompanies me—everywhere!

March. Your accompanist? Indeed, a good accompanist is invaluable. And you, sir, are also Italian?

Maguire (*also hopping sympathetically*). I? Oh, I come from Pettytwiddllm.

Wood. (*hastily*). Pettytwiddllm, a romantic village on the Abruzzi. His name is Magghia: he was formerly a brigand, but he's reclaimed. He's quite harmless.

March. A reclaimed brigand? How supremely interesting. Then, if everything is ready, my guests shall come in—they're dying to hear you. (*To MAGUIRE*.) Will you oblige me with your arm?

Maguire (*gives his arm to MARCHIONESS*). More guests! What a wedding this is, to be sure! [*Exeunt, both hopping.*]

Wood. I'm going mad—I feel it! My reason totters on its throne!

*Enter PATTY with bandbox.*

Patty. Here's the straw hat!

Wood. The straw hat! Hurrah! Saved—saved! Take this sixpence—and be happy. (*Opens bandbox and takes out a*

*black straw hat.*) A black straw! Positively a black straw! Come here, miss, there's some mistake. I want a Leghorn hat, trimmed with a parrot's head, an armadillo's claw, two mackerel, one peach, three truffles, and a bun!

*Patty.* Oh! my lady gave that one to her niece, Mrs. Major-General Bunthunder.

*Wood.* All the ground to go over again! Where does she live?

*Patty.* 12, Park Street, Grosvenor Square.

*Wood.* Right! Vanish! (*Exit PATTY.*) My course is clear—I must be off, and leave my father-in-law and the wedding party to square matters with the Marchioness.

[*Exit rapidly.*]

*Re-enter MARCHIONESS and MAGUIRE with the MARCHIONESS's guests.*

*March.* Now if you will kindly take your places, the concert will begin. Why, where is Signor Nisnardi!

*Enter DUKE, leading WOODPECKER by the ear.*

*Duke.* He was actually bolting! I napped him just as he was getting into eight cabs.

*Wood.* No—no, you are mistaken! I had forgotten my tuning-fork, and I was going to fetch it! (*Aside.*) Oh dim! dim! dim!

*All. (applauding).* Bravo! bravo!

*Wood. (aside).* This is most awkward! I'm a bad baritone! What in the world shall I sing them?

[*MAGUIRE sits at piano and strikes a few discords.*]

*WOODPECKER begins on a ridiculously high note.*

*Bopaddy (behind curtains).* Ladies and Gentlemen!

*All.* Eh? (*Movement of surprise.*)

*Bo.* As the oldest friend of Maria Tapping, I beg to propose the health of the bride!

[*Exclamations from MARCHIONESS and her guests.*]

*Wedding Guests (behind curtains).* Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!

#### CHORUS OF WEDDING GUESTS.

Hurrah for the bride with a right good will—

Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!

For the bridegroom bold who pays the bill—

Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!

For his father-in-law give three times three,

And three for her cousin—young Foodle he—

And three for this capital companee—

Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!

[BARNES rushes on and draws aside the curtains, discovering the wedding party at luncheon. BOPADDY on a chair with one foot on the table, with doll's head in one hand and glass of wine in the other. Music changes to "Haste to the Wedding." Party all rise and come down dancing two and two. They cross the stage from R. to L. dancing off I. BOPADDY last with doll's head, WOODPECKER having disappeared as soon as the curtains opened. MARCHIONESS faints in DUKE's arms. General consternation among her guests. Curtain.]

### ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Dressing-room in MAJOR-GENERAL BUNTHUNDER'S House. Door R. and L. Large screen R., with double hinges to fold both ways. The MAJOR-GENERAL is discovered within the screen in full uniform, taking a footbath; a blanket conceals his legs. His boots are on the floor L. of screen. A hot-water can stands near them. His trousers hang on the screen.*

SONG.—BUNTHUNDER.

Though called upon I've never been  
To court a warrior's tomb,  
Or to defend my Sovereign Queen  
In battle's dread boom—boom !  
Resistless I, when I am stirred  
To doughty deeds of wrath,  
So on myself I have conferred  
The Order of the Bath !  
You trace my humour's devious path ?  
You see my meaning through ?  
The knightly Order *the Bath*—  
I don't believe you do !

(*impressively.*)  
(*disappointed.*)

Let me explain—you're in the dark—  
The "Bath" a high degree  
Conferred no warriors of mark,  
But not conferred on me.  
From "Bath" we easily derive  
This *footbath*—common delf—  
And *that's* the compliment that I've  
Conferred upon myself.

(*explaining.*)

This bath—of crockery or delf—  
A play on meanings twain.  
I'm sorry: I forgot myself—  
It sha'n't occur again.

(*mortified.*)

*Bun.* It's a most extraordinary thing that my wife should not have returned—I can't understand it at all. My wife said to me this morning, at a quarter to nine o'clock, "Bunthunder, I'm going out to buy a pint of Barcelona nuts," and it's now twenty minutes past five in the afternoon, and she has not yet returned. By dint of worrying myself about her I've got a splitting headache, and for a splitting headache there's nothing like putting one's feet in hot water. Where can she be? (*Rising.*) Oh, Leonora, Leonora, if I thought you were deceiving me, there is no vengeance that would be too dire! (*Knock at street door.*) There she is—there she is at last! she's coming upstairs. (*Resuming his seat. Knock at room door.*) Come in, come in! I'm taking a footbath, but come in.

*Enter* WOODPECKER.

DUET.—WOODPECKER and BUNTHUNDER.

*Wood.* Your pardon, sir. Am I addressing  
The Major-General Bunthunder,  
I greatly wonder?  
In search of him I roam.

*Bun.* I am, as you are rightly guessing,  
That most unhappy warrior—  
No man sorrier—  
But I am not at home.

*Wood (suspiciously).* You're not at home?

*Bun.* No, sir, I'm not at home.

*Wood.* This information is distressing;  
If you will shortly be returning,  
My soul is burning  
With keen anxiety to know?

*Bun.* I've gone abroad on business pressing;  
When home from places foreigneering  
I shall be steering  
Is quite uncertain! Go!

*Wood (doubtfully).* Uncertain? Oh!

*Bun.* It's quite uncertain! Go!

SOLO.—WOODPECKER.

From the Marchioness's,  
Whom nobody guesses  
To be of the rank of a peeress or peer—  
In courtesy lacking  
They sent us all packing,  
And each with a very fine flea in his ear.  
Those Johnnies and Jackies  
The overfed lackies  
They "went for" the bride and her guests with a rush—  
The combat was heated  
But we were defeated  
By insolent armies of powder and plush.

And Mister Maguire,  
Who's raging with ire,  
Has taken an oath by the powers that he,  
That restaurant-keeper  
Shall not close a peeper  
Until she has published an apologee!  
Ha! ha! ha! ha!  
Until she has published an apologee!

*Bun.* Well, sir, what's all that to me, sir? Will you go, sir?

*Wood.* Oh, I see (*raising blanket*), you're taking a footbath.

*Bun. (furious).* I won't listen to you. I'm not well. I've got a headache! Who are you?

*Wood.* Woodpecker Tapping—married this morning: the wedding party is at your door, in eight cabs.

*Bun.* I don't know you, sir! What do you want?

*Wood.* Your wife.

*Bun. (rising).* My wife! Do you know my wife?

*Wood.* Not at all, but she possesses something that I am most anxious to purchase.

*Bun.* We don't sell it. Will you go?

*Wood.* Not till I've seen Mrs. Bunthunder.

*Bun.* She's not at home.

*Wood.* Nonsense, I know better! I dare say she's in here—at all events, I mean to look. [Sings.]

[WOODPECKER closes screen round BUNTHUNDER, concealing him from the audience, and leaving his boots outside on his L. WOODPECKER then runs into room R.]

*Bun.* He's a thief! He's a burglar! Wait one moment—only one moment, until I've finished dressing!

*Enter MAGUIRE L., limping.*

*Mag.* My son-in-law is a most remarkable person; he invites us to his house, and when we get there, he shuts the door in our faces! Fortunately the lock didn't catch, and here I am. Now, now I shall be able to take off these confounded tight boots which have been bothering me all day!

*Bun. (in screen).* One moment—only one moment!

[Taking his trousers, which are hanging over the top of the screen.]

*Mag.* Hallo, Woodpecker! He's in here. Ha! (*Seeing BUNTHUNDER's boots.*) The very thing; that's uncommonly lucky! (*Takes off his own boots and puts on BUNTHUNDER's.*) The very thing! (*They are much too large for him.*) Dear me, what a relief!

[Puts his own boots by screen, where BUNTHUNDER's were.]



*Bun.* (reaching round screen for his boots, and takes MAGUIRE'S). Now for my boots—wait one moment—only one moment!

*Mag.* I say, my boy, your wife's below.

*Bun.* Oh, my wife's below, is she? Just one moment—I'm nearly ready!

*Mag.* All right! I'll go downstairs and tell them all to come up.

[Exit MAGUIRE. At the same moment enter BOPADDY.

*Bun.* (in screen). My feet seem much swollen, I can scarcely get my boots on; but no matter. Now, then! (Coming out of screen sees BOPADDY, whom he mistakes for WOODPECKER, swings him round.) Now, you scoundrel, I've got you!

*Bo.* Don't—I don't want to dance—I'm quite tired out!

*Bun.* It's not the same—it's another of the gang! (Noise heard within.) He's in there! [Rushes off R.

*Bo.* Another wedding guest, and in regimentals, too! Dear, dear—Woodpecker is certainly doing it uncommonly well!

[Music, "Haste to the Wedding." Enter MAGUIRE, FOODLE, MARIA, and the wedding party, all dancing on in couples. They dance round the stage, and range themselves at back.

*Mag.* That's right, my dears—stop there, because Woodpecker hasn't quite finished dressing—he's behind the screen, and he won't be a minute, and you mustn't look, any of you. (The screen is now open.) Woodpecker, my boy, your wife is here; and while you're completing your toilet, I'll give you both a bit of matrimonial advice, drawn from my own experience.

#### SONG.—MAGUIRE.

If you value a peaceable life,  
 This maxim will teach you to get it:  
 In all things give in to your wife,—  
 I didn't—I lived to regret it.  
 My wife liked to govern alone,  
 And she never would share with another;  
 Remarkably tall and well grown,  
 She had plenty of muscle and bone,  
 With an excellent will of her own—  
 And my darling takes after her mother!  
 Oh, if early in life  
 I had happily known  
 How to humour a wife  
 With a will of her own,  
 We should not have been snarling  
 All day at each other—  
 And, remember, my darling  
 Takes after her mother!

Never wake up her temper,—I did—  
 And smash went a window, instanter ;  
 Invariably do as you're bid, —  
 I didn't—bang went a decanter.  
 Give in to each whim,—I declined—  
 At my head went a vinegar-cruet.  
 Whatever inducement you find,  
 Never give her advice of a kind  
 That is known as "a bit of your mind,"—  
 I did—and the crockery knew it !  
 Oh, if early in life  
 I had happily known, &c.

Though her aspect was modest and meek,  
 She could turn on the steam in a minute :  
 Her eruptions went on for a week—  
 Vesuvius, my boy, wasn't in it.  
 Give your wife of indulgence her fill,  
 Though your meals be unpleasantly scrappy—  
 Never look at her milliner's bill ;  
 Gulp down that extravagant pill,  
 And you may, and you probably will,  
 Be bankrupt—and thoroughly happy !  
 Oh, if early in life  
 I had happily known, &c.

[*Music, "Haste to the Wedding."* Wedding party all dance off.

*Enter* WOODPECKER L., *with several hats in one hand, and the specimen in the other.*

DUET.—WOODPECKER and BUNTHUNDER.

Wood. I've come across hats of all colours and sorts,  
 But none like this specimen, demme !

*Enter* BUNTHUNDER L.

Bun. (*seizing him*). Thief ! Burglar ! Away to the Criminal Courts,  
 With your skeleton keys and your jemmy !

Wood. Excuse me, you're really mistaken in that—

I'll prove it, if patient you'll be, sir :  
 This morning my horse ate a young lady's hat—

Bun. Well, what does that matter to me, sir ?

Wood. But she's now at my lodgings—and leave them she won't  
 Until I've produced her another !

Bun. ' By all that is prudent and proper, why don't  
 The young lady go home to her mother ?  
 Already too long she has tarried—

Why don't the young widow withdraw ?  
 Wood. Young widow ? good gracious, she's married,  
 And her husband can claim her by law !

Bun. (tickled). Ha, ha! Ho, ho!  
Sly dog! (*Digging* WOODPECKER in the ribs.)

Wood. (same business). Sly dog!

Both. Ha, ha! Ho, ho!

Wood. Now, her husband's a jealous old fellow,  
A savage old Tartar, no doubt,  
A middle-class white-washed Othello—  
One leg in the grave, and one out!

Bun. (much amused). Ha, ha! Ho, ho!  
Sly dog!

Wood. Sly dog!

Both. Ha, ha! Ho, ho!

Wood. Now, you'd think he'd abuse her or thrash her,  
Just to give her a kind of a fright.

(Spoken.) My dear sir, he'd simply and silently smash her!

Bun. (emphatically). And, by George, he'd be perfectly right!

Ha, ha! Ho, ho!

Sly dog!

Wood. Sly dog!

Both. Ha, ha! Ho, ho!

Wood. Now, assist me if you could be brought to,  
We'd hoodwink Othello, I bet—

Bun. No, really I don't think I ought to,  
I don't think I ought to—and yet—

Ha, ha! Ho, ho!

Sly dog!

Wood. Sly dog!

Both. Ha, ha! Ho, ho!

Wood. (with specimen). Here are the fragments—decorated they,  
With choicest gifts of Flora's.

Bun. (recognizing them). By all the blighting tricks that devils  
play,

This hat is Leonora's!

(pointing to name in hat). Her name, sir—Leonora's!

Wood. Quite right, it's Leonora's!

Ha, ha! ho, ho!

Sly dog!

Bun. Be quiet, sir! The married lady  
For whom, with motives base and shady,  
A furnished lodging you've provided,  
Turns to be my wife misguided!

Wood. What!

Bun. (seizing him). Scoundrel, villain, scurvy traitor!

Peace of mind exterminator!

So, for private tater-tater,

With my wife you've made a fixture!

Wood. Let me go, sir—you're mistaken,

Or my anger you'll awaken;

I object thus to be shaken

Like an eighteenpenny mixture!

ENSEMBLE.

<p><b>BUNTHUNDER.</b>          Fire and fury !          Judge in ermine          (With a jury)          Shall determine          How to treat this social wrong,          sir—          Come along, sir—come along,          sir !</p>	<p><b>WOODPECKER.</b>          Cease your fury !          Judge in ermine          My injury          Shall determine !          Your remarks are clearly wrong,          sir—          Much too strong, sir—much too          strong, sir !</p>
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[BUNTHUNDER drags WOODPECKER off L. Music changes to "Haste to the Wedding." The wedding party enter c., dance in couples across the stage, after them. BOPADDY last with the doll's head.]

SCENE CHANGES.

SCENE II.—*A street, with Square in the distance. A rainy night. WOODPECKER'S house L., another house beyond it. Police-station R. A lamp c. supported by brackets from each side of the stage. A lamp-post L.U.E. Window of first floor of police-station is practicable. Door-steps to WOODPECKER'S house, a light in one window. A gutter crosses the stage.*

[Music, "Haste to the Wedding." Wedding party enter from L. U. E., dancing in couples round stage, with umbrellas up. BOPADDY politely holding umbrella over doll's head.]

*Mag. (leading them).* This way, my friends—this way !  
*Hallo !* look out for the gutter !

[He jumps over it—all the wedding party follow, jumping over it in succession.]

*Maria.* Oh, papa, where's Woodpecker ?

*Mag.* Eh ? Isn't he here ? Why, he has given us the slip again !

*Maria.* Papa dear, I'm so tired—I can't go any farther !  
 [Sits on step of WOODPECKER'S house.]

*Food.* And my new boots hurt me so that I must sit down !  
 [Crosses and sits by her.]

*Mag. (stamping about in Major-General's boots).* Ha, ha !  
 so did mine, but I've changed 'em !

*Maria.* Oh, papa, why did you send away the cabs ?

*Mag.* Why ? I've paid 'em eleven pounds fifteen already—  
 isn't that enough ? But where are we ?

*All.* I don't know !

*Maria.* Woodpecker told us to follow him to his house.  
 No. 8, Little Pickleboy Gardens, Mulberry Square.

*Mag.* Perhaps this is Mulberry Square. (*To BOPADDY.*) Your great grandfather used to live in London—is this Mulberry Square?

*Bo.* Yes—yes, it is—splendid—splendid weather for ducks and peas! Ha, ha! Oh, yes—for ducks and peas!

*Mag.* He's doting—doting!

*Enter WILKINSON, a policeman.*

*Wilkinson (sneezes).*

*Mag.* Here's a policeman, I'll ask him. (*Very politely.*) I beg your pardon, but will you be so polite as to tell me if this is Little Pickleboy Gardens, Mulberry Square?

*Wilk. (sternly).* Move on! [*Exit.*]

*Mag.* And I pay taxes to support that overbearing underling! I feed him, I clothe him, I lodge him, and I pay him; and in return he tells me to move on! Insupportable bureaucrat!

*Food. (who has climbed up lamp-post and read name of street).* Hurrah! Little Pickleboy Gardens. It's all right—here we are!

*Mag.* And here is No. 8. (*To MARIA, who is sitting on the doorstep.*) Get up, my dear.

*Maria.* Papa dear, it's no use—I must sit down somewhere.

*Mag.* Not in a muddy road, in a thirty-seven and sixpenny wedding dress, my love. Why don't they come? [*Knocks.*]

*Food.* There's a light in the first floor.

*Mag.* Then Woodpecker must have arrived before us. (*Calls.*) Woodpecker! Woodpecker!

*All.* Woodpecker! Woodpecker!

*Enter WILKINSON, R.I.E.*

*Wilkinson (to BOPADDY, who has fallen asleep on step).* Now, then, can't have that noise here! (*Shakes him.*) Move on! Move on, will you?

[*Pushing his shoulder, which is muddy.*]  
*Bo.* Thank you, my dear friend; don't you trouble to brush it off; I'll do that when I go in.

[*Exit WILKINSON, L.U.E. JACKSON opens door of WOODPECKER'S house.*]

*Mag.* Hurrah! Here we are! Come in!

[*Music commences "Haste the Wedding" as the wedding party dance into the house.*]

*Jack.* Stop. (*All stop suddenly in arrested attitudes.*) Out of the question!

*Mag.* Eh?

*Jack.* Impossible! more than my place is worth. Why, the lady is still upstairs!

[*Movement.*]

*Mag.* A lady! What lady?

*Jack.* The lady who is stopping with master—the lady without a hat.

*Mag.* A lady stopping with your master!

*Food.* On his wedding-day!

*Maria.* And without a hat! [*Faints into FOODLE'S arms.*]

*Mag. (furiously).* It's off! It's off! I'll get you divorced, my dear. Foodle shall have you!

*Food.* Maria!

*Mag.* Come along back to Pettywiddllm. There's a train at eleven; we shall just catch it.

*Maria.* Oh, papa—papa——

*Mag.* What is it, my child?

*Maria (tragically).* Am I never—never to see Woodpecker again?

*Mag.* Never!

*Maria.* Woodpecker, whom I loved so fondly, and who was the very music of my little life?

*Mag.* Never!

*Maria.* Oh! Then hadn't I better take back my wedding-presents?

*Mag.* My dear, you're a very sensible girl. To be sure you had. (*To JACKSON.*) Go and bring out all my daughter's wedding-presents—mind—every one!

[*Exit JACKSON into house.*]

*Enter WOODPECKER, as if pursued.*

*All.* Here is the monster!

*Mag.* It's off! It's off! You—you serpent!

*Wood.* Hold your tongue—be quiet! I hear him—he's coming!

*Mag.* Who's coming?

*Wood.* Major-General Bunthunder. (*Listening.*) No—he's missed me—he's got tight boots and he can't run. There'll be time to get Leonora out of the house before he arrives.

*Mag.* Oho! So, sir, you own to Leonora?

*Wood.* Of course I own to Leonora!

*All.* Oho! He owns to Leonora!

*Enter JACKSON from house with his arms full of wedding-presents, done up in parcels.*

*Jack.* Here are the wedding-presents.

*Mag.* My friends, let us each take a parcel (*JACKSON gives a parcel to each, MAGUIRE gets the bandbox given by BOPADDY in Act 1*). And now off we go to Pettytwiddllm!

*Wood.* What's all this?

*Jack.* Wedding-presents, sir.

*Wood.* Oh, this won't do! Drop those things directly!

[*All drop their parcels.*]

*Mag.* Nonsense—pick them all up again!

[*All pick up parcels. WOODPECKER and MAGUIRE struggle for the bandbox.*]

*Bo.* Take care—you'll crush it! It's a Leghorn hat worth twenty pounds!

*Wood.* What!

*Bo.* It's my little present—I'm in the trade. I sent to Florence for it, for my little niece!

*Wood.* Give it here. (*Takes bandbox from MAGUIRE—takes out straw hat and compares it with the fragments.*) Good heavens, it's the very thing! Here's the cockatoo—and the armadillo's claw—and the mackerel—and the peach—why, it's the very thing I've been looking for all day!

[*Shakes hands with BOPADDY, holding the bandbox under his arm.*]

*Mag. (aside).* A hat worth twenty pounds! He sha'n't have it, the scamp!

[*Takes hat out of bandbox unobserved, and shuts box again.*]

*Wood. (who believes that the hat is in the box).* Wait one moment—I'll give her the hat and then we'll all go in and enjoy ourselves.

[*Exit into house.*]

*Mag. (who has watched him off).* Now, my friends—off we go to Pettytwiddllm.

[*All going.*]

*Enter WILKINSON.*

*Wilk.* Hallo! what's all this? What are you doing with these parcels?

*Mag.* We—we are moving.

*Wilk.* What! at this time o' night? This won't do, you know—I know you!

*Mag.* Sir!

*Wilk.* What have you got here, eh?

*Mag.* That? Oh, that's a—a carriage clock.

*Wilk. (opens muff-box and finds a muff).* That's very like a carriage clock! Come along—all on yer, in yer go!

[*Music, "Haste to the Wedding." They all dance into*

station-house, except BOPADDY who is walking off slowly, talking to his doll's head.

*Bo. (to doll's head).* It was a nice ickle gal! It was a very nice ickle gal! Don't know that I ever saw a nicer ickle gal!

*Wilk. (coming out of station-house, crosses to BOPADDY).* Now, then—come along—in yer go!

[*WILKINSON taps BOPADDY on the shoulder, and points to station. BOPADDY mildly expostulates, and resumes his flirtation with the doll's head. WILKINSON seizes him roughly. BOPADDY again remonstrates. WILKINSON shakes him, BOPADDY suddenly turns furious, flies at WILKINSON, knocks him down, seizes his staff, thrashes him soundly, and finally drags him off triumphantly into station.*]

*Enter WOODPECKER, CAPTAIN BAPP, and LEONORA from house.*

*Wood.* Come along, you are saved! I've found the hat! Make haste, put it on and be off before your husband arrives!

[*He gives them the band-box. They open it.*]

*All.* Empty!

*Wood.* It was there—I'll swear it was! My old villain of a father-in-law has stolen it! (*Enter WILKINSON from station-house.*) Where is my father-in-law?

*Wilk.* Where? Station-'us.

*Wood.* And my wedding party?

*Wilk.* Station-'us. Run 'em all in. [*Exit WILKINSON.*]

*Wood.* And they've got the hat! What is to be done?

*Bapp.* Wait a moment—I know the Inspector—he'll give it to me if I explain the facts.

[*Exit into station-house.*]

*Bun. (without).* Stop! Cabman! Hi! Put me down here!

*Leo.* Heavens! my husband! I'll run and hide in your house!

*Wood.* Not for worlds! He's coming to search it!

*Leo.* But what shall I do?

*Wood.* I know! I'll give you in charge. Hi! policeman. (*Re-enter WILKINSON.*) Take this woman away. Drunk and disorderly. [*Tipping him.*]

*Wilk. (R. crosses to her).* What, agin? Come along—I know yer! [*Walks her into station.*]

*Enter BUNTHUNDER, hobbling.*

*Bun.* So, here you are! Open your door! I'll blow her brains out, and your brains out, and my own brains out!



Wood. By all means—only take me last!

[Exit BUNTHUNDER into house.

[CAPTAIN BAPP appears at window of station-house, first floor.

Bapp. Quick! quick! here's the hat!

Wood. Throw it out—make haste!

[BAPP throws hat, which rests on the lamp—just out of reach.

Wood. Confound it!

[Tries to unhook it with his umbrella, but in vain.

Re-enter BUNTHUNDER from house.

Bun. She's not there! Forgive me, I've been unjust!

Wood. You have. Come under my umbrella.

[Takes BUNTHUNDER's arm, and puts up umbrella to conceal hat. They both stand under the lamp.

Bun. No, no—it doesn't rain! Put the umbrella down. It's quite fine overhead.

Wood. But it's so wet underfoot.

Bun. That's true. I've made a great fool of myself, sir.

Wood. You have.

[He jumps to unhook the hat with his umbrella, and makes BUNTHUNDER jump too.

Bun. I apologize, sir.

Wood. I think you should, sir.

[Jumps.

Bun. Forgive me, sir.

Wood. I do, sir.

[Jumps.

Bun. What are you jumping for?

Wood. Violent cramp—indigestion. Can't help it—always takes me so.

Bun. Indeed! Have you tried—— (WOODPECKER jumps again and comes down on BUNTHUNDER's toes.) Don't, sir! I won't be trodden on by bridegrooms!

Enter LEONORA from station, followed by MAGUIRE, BOPADDY, and all the guests—one of whom unhooks the hat, which falls to the ground.

Mag. It's all right—it's all right! The Captain has squared the Inspector, and we leave the Court without a stain on our characters! Oh, it's a great country!

FINALE.

CHORUS.

Free, free! Hurrah!

Free, free! Hurrah!

False charges fade into thin air—

(This is a great Countrec!)

When English justice, nobly fair—  
 (This is a great Countree !)  
 Is freely tipped with English gold !  
 For then the wicked oppressor is sold,  
 And all stray lambs come back to the fold—  
 This is a great Countree !  
 Yes—  
 This is a great Countree !

*Leo. (coming forward wearing the hat).*

So, sir—I've found you out at last !

*Wood. (aside, astonished).* She's got the hat !

*Leo.* At your assurance I'm aghast !

*Bun. (aside astonished).* She's got the hat !

*Leo.* While you've been on clandestine jaunts—

*Bo. (aside).* She's got my hat !

*Leo.* I've waited for you—at my aunt's !

I've waited, waited, waited, waited—

All day I've waited for you—at my aunt's !

CHORUS.

She's got the hat—she's got the hat !  
 (We don't know how, but never mind that)—  
 It's tat for tit, and tit for tat—  
 She's got the hat, she's got the hat !

*Bun.* Forgive me—I have been unjust !

*All.* She's got the hat !

*Bun.* You'll overlook the past, I trust ?

*All.* She's got the hat !

*Bun.* But, stop ! The gate of Heaven shuts !

*All.* She's got the hat.

*Bun.* Where are the Barcelona nuts !

The Barcelona—Iona—Iona—

You have *not* got the Barcelona nuts !

CHORUS.

Well, what of this and what of that--  
 Somehow or other she's got the hat—  
 It's tat for tit, and tit for tat—  
 She's got the hat, she's got the hat !

FINAL CHORUS.

Ring, ye joybells, long and loudly,  
 Happy hearts together tied—  
 Bridegroom's bosom swelling proudly  
 As he takes his blushing bride !

[*During these lines the Bride and Bridegroom bid farewell to the guests and go towards the house. All the others gradually move off R. except BOPADDY, who, still carrying his doll's head, proposes to enter the house with the bridal couple. He is brought back by MAGUIRE as the curtain falls.*]



FALLEN FAIRIES;  
OR,  
THE WICKED WORLD.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

### FAIRIES.

THE FAIRY ETHAIS	...	...	...	MR. CLAUDE FLEMMING.
THE FAIRY PHYLLON	...	...	...	MR. LEO SHEFFIELD.
SELENE ( <i>the Fairy Queen</i> )	...	...	...	MISS NANCY MCINTOSH.
DARINK	}	<i>Fairies</i>	{	MISS MAIDIE HOPE.
ZAYDA				MISS JESSIE ROSE.
LOCRINE				MISS ETHEL MORRISON.
ZARA				MISS MABEL BURNEGE.
CORA				MISS RITA OTWAY.
LILA				MISS RUBY GREY.
NEODIE				MISS ALICE COX.
FLETA				MISS MARJORIE DAWES.
CHLORIS				MISS GLADYS LANCASTER.
MAIA				MISS MIRIAM LYCETT.
CLYTIE				MISS ISABEL AGNEW.
AND				
LUTIN ( <i>a Serving Fairy</i> )	...	...	...	MR. C. HERBERT WORKMAN.

### MORTALS.

SIR ETHAIS	}	<i>Two Hunnish Knights</i>	{	MR. CLAUDE FLEMMING.
SIR PHYLLON				MR. LEO SHEFFIELD.
LUTIN ( <i>Sir Ethais's Henchman</i> )	...	...	...	MR. C. HERBERT WORKMAN.

# FALLEN FAIRIES; OR, THE WICKED WORLD.

## ACT I.

SCENE.—*Fairyland, which for the purposes of the play, is supposed to be situate on the upper side of a cloud which floats over the earth. The scene represents a land of ideal beauty, with fountains, trees, waterfalls, &c. At L. is the Fairy Queen's bower.*

DARINE and LOCRINE are discovered on an eminence R.C., up stage, which overlooks gap in the cloud.

*Locrine.*

Oh, world below !  
Oh, wicked world,  
Where sin and woe  
Lie all unfurled !  
Oh, world of shame,  
Of guilt and greed,  
Where joy in name  
Is woe indeed !  
May angels' tears be shed on thee,  
Thou wicked world of misery !

[*As LOCRINE sings, Fairies enter from different approaches and fill the stage, NEODIE, ZAYDA, CORA, LILA, and others leading them.*

*Enter DARINE.*

SOLO.

*Darine.*

Oh, picture to thyself a mortal crew  
Sinning throughout their lives, as demons do !  
Fierce wild barbaric shapes, all foul within—  
Howling with hunger for more sin—more sin !

Fierce wild barbaric shapes,  
 All head and tail;  
 Some like red raving apes,  
 Some clad in scale;  
 Others like dead-fleshed ghouls  
 With horny eyes,  
 Squatting on black toadstools  
 Of monstrous size!

All of them foul without and foul within;  
 All glimmering in the lurid light of sin!

*Chorus.* All of them foul without and foul within;  
 All glimmering in the lurid light of sin!

*Neodie (recit.).*

Selene comes; as silvery moon serene,  
 Radiant with loveliness, our sister-Queen!

*Enter SELENE.*

CHORUS.

Pure as the air, sweet as the morning dew,  
 Cometh our Queen!  
 Bright in all eyes as Heaven's ethereal blue,  
 Cometh our Queen!  
 Spirit of love! as thou hast ever been,  
 Be to us evermore, oh sister-Queen!  
 Unsullied source  
 Of tranquil joy,  
 Pursue thy course  
 Of pure employ—  
 Be thou, as thou hast ever been,  
 Our all-beloved sister-Queen!

*Selene.* Dear sisters, I bring news. Ere very long,  
 Lutin, who, by the will of that great king  
 To whom we all yield faithful suzerainty,  
 Left Fairyland to join him in mid-earth,  
 Will home return. He is the only one  
 Of our immortal race  
 Who has set foot upon that wicked world!

*Zayda.* Lutin returning! He will set at rest  
 Our wild and wondering theories, and reveal,  
 In picture-painting words, the demon deeds  
 Of all the goblin murder-mongers that  
 Infest that sink of seething infamy!

*Enter ETHAIS, a male Fairy, followed by PHYLLON, another male Fairy.*

*Ethais.* In truth, dear sister, if Man's face and form  
 Were a true index to his character,  
 He were a fearsome thing to look upon.

But Man, alas! is formed as we are formed.  
False from the first, he comes into the world  
Wearing a smiling lie upon his face  
That he may cheat ere he can use his tongue!

*Darine.* As we are formed?

*Phyllon.* 'Tis so, in very truth.

Dost thou not know that every soul on earth  
Hath, in our ranks, his fairy counterpart?

*Darine.* His counterpart?

*Selene.* Aye, on that wicked world

Thou, I, and all who dwell in Fairyland,

May find a parallel identity—

So perfect that, if it were possible

To place us by those earthly counterparts,

No man on earth, no fairy in the clouds

Could tell which was the fairy—which the man!

*Zara.* Is there no shade of difference?

*Phyllon.* Yes, one,

For we are absolutely free from sin,

While all our representatives on earth

Are stained with every kind of infamy!

*Zayda.* Are all our counterparts so steeped in sin?

*Selene.* All, in a greater or a less degree.

*Zayda.* What, even mine?

*Selene.* Alas!

*Zayda.* Oh, no—not mine!

*Selene.* All men and women sin!

[SELENE retires up and exit.

*Darine.* I wonder what

My counterpart is doing now!

*Zayda.* Some deed

Detestable in its degeneracy!

Best not enquire! See, Lutin comes at last!

He'll tell thee—so prepare ye for the worst!

*Enter LUTIN, appearing through the gap in the cloud as though rising from the earth below.*

CHORUS.

Hail, Lutin, wondrous traveller!

Thrice welcome back to Fairyland!

Exploring fay, thyself bestir

To tell us all

That did befall

Thy stay amid those mortals banned

While far away from Fairyland!



- Darine.* We to ascertain are eager  
All the ills that did beleaguer  
And assail thy mortal portals  
Whilst thou wast among the mortals.
- Fleta.* Didst thou join in all their revels?  
Drink and dance with all their devils?  
Didst thou see, with awestruck daring,  
Dicer dicing, swearer swearing?
- Zayda.* Didst thou watch, with sorrow sobbing,  
Liar lying, robber robbing,  
Drinker drinking, gorger gorging,  
Pinker pinking, forger forging?
- Lochrine.* Coerer cooing, biller billing,  
Wooser wooing, killer killing,  
Prater prating, blabber blabbing,  
Hater hating, stabber stabbing?
- All four.* Kicker kicking, beater beating,  
Sticker sticking, cheater cheating?  
Tell us all that did befall—  
Tell us some and tell us all!
- Chorus.* Tell us all that did befall—  
Tell us some and tell us all!  
Didst thou join in all their revels?  
Didst thou dance with all their devils?  
Didst thou watch, with sorrow sobbing,  
Liar lying, robber robbing? &c.  
Tell us all that did befall—  
Tell us some and tell us all!
- Lutin (recit.).* What! tell you all? Not so!  
All that down there occurred?  
'Twould numb your souls with awe—  
You know not what you ask!  
Describe you all I know?  
Repeat you all I heard?  
Narrate you all I saw?  
God save me from such a task!  
One tale I'll try to tell—it will suffice  
To illustrate their tendency to vice!
- SONG.—*Lutin.*
- Lutin.* One incident I'll tell that will appal  
Each gentle little heart and head.  
Come, fairies, gather round me, one and all—  
(The details to impart I dread!)  
A tale to cause a demon's flesh to creep,  
And absolutely shock his ears;  
'Twould summon tears to eyes that never weep,  
And melt a very rock to tears!
- Chorus.* 'Twould melt a very rock to tears!  
*Lutin.* So horribly bad that tale appears,  
It's scarcely fit for fairy spheres;  
'Twould outrage e'en a demon's ears—  
And I'm going to tell it to you, my dears!

*Chorus (in great delight).*

He's going to tell it to us, my dears !

*Lutin.* Although 'twill make your blood run cold,  
The terrible details I'll unfold !

*Chorus.* So horribly bad that tale appears,  
It's scarcely fit for fairy spheres ;  
'Twould outrage e'en a demon's ears—

*Lutin.* And I'm going to tell it to you, my dears !  
There was a gallant knight of Portugee,  
Who loved a Moorish maid so well  
That he took ship and sailed for Barbaree  
(That's where the little jade did dwell).  
He journeyed o'er the stormy sea apace  
(Of nothing was that knight afraid),  
And when at last they met in an embrace,  
What do you think that naughty maiden said ?

*Chorus.* We wonder what the little hussy said !

*Lutin.* She said—but no, their dark careers  
Would shock your souls and draw your tears ;  
They're quite unfit for decent ears—  
And I'm hanged if I'll tell 'em to you, my dears !

*Chorus (disappointed).*

He'll be hanged if he'll tell 'em to us, my dears !

*Lutin.* First thoughts are silver—second, gold ;  
And I'm sorry to say that they can't be told !

*Chorus (exed).*

His tale is cast in mocking mould—  
He says it is both bad and bold ;  
We hoped for details, and behold—

*Lutin and Chorus.*

I'm } sorry to say that they can't be told !  
He's }

ETHAIS and PHYLLON enter.

*Lutin.* Attend. Obedient to our King's command,  
I met him in mid-earth. He bade me send  
Both Ethais and Phyllon down below.

*Ethais.* Down to mid-earth ?

*Lutin.* Down to mid-earth at once.

He hath some gift, some priceless privilege,  
With which he would endow our fairy world,  
And he hath chosen Phyllon and thyself  
To bear his bounty to this home of ours.

*Zayda.* Another boon ? Why, brother Ethais,  
What can our monarch give that we have not ?

*Phyllon.* In truth I cannot say ! 'Twould seem that we  
Had reached the sum of fairy happiness !

*Selene.* But then we thought the same before our King  
Endowed us with the gift of melody ;  
And now how tame our fairy life would seem

Were melody to perish from our land!  
*Ethais.* Well said, Selene. Come, then, let's away,  
 And on our journey through the outer air  
 We will take note of its inhabitants  
 And bring you full account of all we see.  
 Farewell, dear sisters—

*Selene.* Brothers, fare ye well!  
 [*ETHAIS and PHYLLON take leave of the Fairies and descend, through the gap in the cloud. Exit LUTIN.*]

*Zayda.* Now here's a riddle that I cannot solve :—  
 Why do those mortals bear their weight of woe  
 When they can end it at their will? They need  
 Not live unless they like. Nevertheless,  
 With swords and daggers hanging at their sides,  
 With drowning seas and rivers at their feet,  
 With deadly poisons in their very grasp,  
 Men live, and live—and seem to like to live!

*Darine.* How strangely inconsistent!

*Selene.* Not at all.  
 With all their misery—with all the sin—  
 With all the elements of wretchedness  
 That teem on that unholy world of theirs,  
 They have one great and ever-glorious gift  
 That compensates for all they have to bear!

SONG.—SELENE.

With all the misery, with all the shame  
 That stain the earth,  
 One holy influence these mortals claim—  
 A gift of priceless worth!  
 The gift of Love—shield against deadly foes  
 That crowd in serried shoals—  
 A Love that's anodyne to all the woes  
 That wring their souls!  
 Oh, kindly Love! Man sorrowing and oppressed,  
 Beneath his load of shame would surely fall,  
 But for the sweet enchantment in his breast  
 That tells him that he bears no load at all!

In its most pure and most enduring form  
 It knows no end;  
 To deed of shame or stress of worldly storm  
 Such love will never bend.  
 Time cannot wither it, nor Death destroy;  
 When the relentless Thief  
 Has robbed it of the power to live on joy,  
 It lives on grief!

Oh, wondrous Love—pure as the silver sky !  
 Even when Death has set the loved one free,  
 This love supernal doth not—cannot die ;  
 It lives upon the loved one's memory !

*[During this song, the Fairies, who at the commencement were scattered over the stage, have very gradually crept nearer and nearer to her, until, at the finish, they are grouped closely around her.]*

*Darine.* Why, what have we in all our Fairyland  
 To bear comparison with such a gift !

*Zayda.* Oh for one hour of such a love as that,  
 O'er all things paramount ! Why, after all,  
 That wicked world is the true Fairyland !

*Zura.* Why, who can wonder that poor, erring Man  
 Clings to the world, all poisoned though it be,  
 When on it grows this glorious antidote !

*Zayda.* And may we never love as mortals love ?

*Selene.* No, that can never be. Of earthy things,  
 This love of theirs ranks as the earthliest.  
 We do not need it in our perfect land.  
 Moreover, there's this gulf 'tween it and us—  
 Only a mortal can inspire such love,  
 And mortal foot may never touch our land.

*Zayda.* But—is that so ?

*Selene (surprised).* Of course !

*Zayda.* Yet I have heard

That there's a half-forgotten law which says  
 That, when a fairy quits his fairy home  
 To visit earth, those whom he leaves behind  
 May summon from that wicked world below  
 That absent fairy's mortal counterpart,  
 And that that mortal counterpart may stay  
 In Fairyland and fill that fairy's place  
 Till he return. Is there not some such law ?

*Selene (horrified).*

And if there were, wouldst put that law in force ?

*Zayda (frightened).*

No, not for all the love of all the world !

*Selene.* A man in Fairyland ! Oh, horrible !

He would exhale the poison of his soul,  
 And we should even be as mortals are—  
 Hating as man hates !

*Darine* (*enthusiastically*).

Loving as man loves!

[*SELENE looks at her in blank surprise.*

Too horrible! Still—

Well?

*Selene.*

*Darine.*

I see a trace

Of wisdom lurking in this ancient law.

*Selene.* Where lurks that wisdom, then? I see it not!

DUET.—DARINE AND ZAYDA.

*Darine.* Man is a being all accuse  
Of every vice detestable :  
To virtue blinded, he pursues  
A course that's unarrestable.  
Yet if we let one man of shame  
Observe our lives immaculate,  
He would (returning whence he came)  
Ecstatically ejaculate—  
“Atone, atone!  
Repent, repent!  
The pure alone  
Know true content!”  
These tidings good,  
No doubt, he would  
Ecstatically ejaculate!

*Chorus.* The news would take the world by storm,  
And be received with welcome warm;  
Those words he would, in some such form,  
Ecstatically ejaculate!

*Zayda.* Man is a brute, oppressed by strange  
Unintellectuality :  
Enlighten him, and you will change  
His normal immorality.  
If we exhibited to some  
Our course of life delectable,  
They might in course of time become  
Comparatively respectable!  
Oh, picture then  
Our joy sublime,  
If mortal men  
Became in time—  
Suppose we say,  
In guarded way,  
Comparatively respectable!

*Chorus.* The news would take the world by storm,  
And be received with welcome warm,  
And all would be by this reform  
Comparatively respectable!

*Selene (reflectively).*

There is some truth in this.

*Zayda.* Some truth indeed !

Oh, terrible, dear sister, to reflect  
That to our cold and culpable neglect  
All mortal follies may be chargeable !

*Selene (surprised).*

To our neglect ?

*Darine.* It may in truth be so !

*Fleta.* In very truth I'm sure that it is so !

*Selene (after a pause).*

It shall be so no more ! Their sin is ours !  
But there—'tis easy still to make amends.  
A mortal *shall* behold our sinless state,  
And learn the beauties of our blameless life.  
Come, let us summon mortal Ethais !

[*All delighted.*]

*Darine.* But—

*Selene.* Not a word—I am resolved to this !

*Darine.* But, sister—

*Selene.* Well ?

*Darine (timidly).* Why summon only one ?

*Selene.* Why summon more ?

*Darine.* The world's incredulous ;  
Let *two* be summoned to our sinless home ;  
Then should their wondrous story be received  
With ridicule or incredulity,  
One could corroborate the other.

*Zayda.* Yes.

Phyllon has gone with Ethais—let us call  
The mortal counterpart of Phyllon too !

*Selene.* Two mortals ! Two unhappy men of sin  
In this untainted spot !

*Locrine.* Well, sister dear,  
Two Heralds of the Truth will spread that Truth  
At the least twice as rapidly as one !

*Selene.* Two miserable men ! Why, one alone  
Will bring enough pollution in his wake  
To taint our happy land from end to end !

*Zayda.* Then, sister, two won't make the matter worse !

*Selene.* There's truth in that !

[*After a pause.*]

The two *shall* come to us !

[*All the Fairies are delighted.* SELENE looks reprovingly at them, and they at once become demure.

*(Severely)*

We have deserved this fearful punishment !

*[ All the Fairies sigh.*

Our power, I think, is limited to two ?

*Lochrine.* Unfortunately !*Selene.*

Yes. More might be done

Had each of us a pupil to herself.

## SCENA.—SELENE.

And now to summon them. But, sisters dear,

Receive our guests with gracious courtesies.

Show no repugnance to them while they're here ;

Subdue your natural antipathies.

Kind, gentle, tender, pitiful be ye—

Be not severe, nor hastily condemn.

Treat them as though they were what they will be

When they have seen what we shall be to them !

*All.*

We'll act as though they were what they will be

When they have seen what we shall be to them !

*Selene.*

What form of words accomplishes our aim ?

*Darine.*

Two roses shall be cast down from the skies,

Then, as each rose is thrown, pronounce the name

Of him whose mortal self it typifies.

*[ Giving her two roses.**Selene (taking them).*

Well then, fair rose, I name thee "Ethais"—

Thy mortal counterpart we summon here.

This rose is Phyllon—come to our realms of bliss :

By virtue of this talisman, appear !

*All.*

Go, then, fair rose. We name thee "Ethais"—

Thy mortal counterpart we summon here.

Sir Phyllon, in our realms of blameless bliss,

By virtue of this talisman appear !

*[Hurried music. SIR ETHAIS and SIR PHYLLON rise through the gap in the cloud, as though violently impelled from below. They are two handsome, barbaric Hunnish knights, clad in picturesque skins and rude armour, and while bearing a strong facial resemblance to their Fairy counterparts, present as strong a contrast as possible in their costume and demeanour. Their swords are drawn, the knights having been interrupted in a duel. The Fairies conceal themselves behind trees.*

RECIT. AND DUET.—SIR ETHAIS and SIR PHYLLON.

*Ethais.* By god and man, who brought us here, and how ?*Phyllon.* Where in the name of witchcraft are we now ?

*Ethais* (*fiercely*).

Why, who should answer that as well as thou?

*Phyllon* (*surprised*).

As I?

*Ethais*, Aye, devil's whelp, as thou!

DUET.—SIR ETHAIS and SIR PHYLLON.

*Ethais* (*fiercely*).

This is some wizardry of thy design

To save thy scone!

Thou scurvy dog, no sorcery of thine

Shall serve e'en for the nonce!

Let all thy hell-hounds howl their requiem,

And when I've done with thee I'll do with them!

*Phyllon* (*saragely*).

Bah! I need no such devil-begotten stuff

To flog a knave!

This trusty falchion serves me well enough

To make a coward crave!

Though demons swarm in myriads round about,

Or here or there we'll fight our quarrel out!

[*They fight. The Fairies, half concealed behind portions of the set, watch the combat with great interest.*]

*Darine*. What are they doing?

*Selene*. It's some game of skill.

It's very pretty.

*Darine*. Very. [*Knights pause to take breath.*  
Oh, they've stopped!

*Phyllon*. Come, come—on guard!

*Zayda*. Now they begin again! [*They fight.*

*Ethais* (*seeing Fairies, who have gradually surrounded him*).

Hold, we are overlooked!

[*ETHAIS, who has turned for a moment in saying this, is severely wounded in the right arm.*]

*Selene*. You may proceed.

We like it much!

*Darine*. You do it very well.

Begin again!

*Ethais*. Black curses on that thrust!

I am disabled! Ladies, bind my wound—

And, if it please you still to see us fight,  
We'll fight for those bright eyes and cherry lips  
Till one or both of us shall bite the dust!

*Phyllon* (*aside to ETHAIS*).

Hold! Call a truce till we return to earth—  
Here are bright eyes enough for both of us!



*Ethais.* I don't know that! Well, there, till we return—  
[*Shaking hands.*]

But, once on earth again, we will take up  
Our argument where it was broken off,  
And let thy devils whirl me where they may  
We'll reach conclusion and corollary!

[*During this the Fairies show that they have been very strongly influenced by the two knights.*]

*Darine* (*gazing at PHYLLON*).  
Oh, fairyhood!

How wonderfully like our Phyllon!

*Selene* (*gazing in rapture at ETHAIS*). Yes!

And see—how strangely like our Ethais!

(*Sighing.*) Thou hast a gallant carriage, gentle knight!

*Ethais.* It's little wonder that I'm like myself!

Why I am he!

*Selene* (*sighing*). No, not our Ethais!

*Ethais.* In truth I am the Ethais of all

Who are as gentle and as fair as thou!

*Selene* (*tenderly*).  
That's bravely said! Thou hast a silver tongue!

Why, what can gods be like if these be men?

[*During this DARINE, ZAYDA, LOCRINE, and other Fairies show, by their manner, that they take a tender interest in ETHAIS and PHYLLON.*]

Say, dost thou come from earth or heaven?

*Ethais* (*gallantly placing his arm round SELENE and DARINE*). I think I've come from earth to heaven!

*Selene* (*delightedly to ZAYDA*). Oh, didst thou hear?

He comes from earth to heaven! No, Ethais,

We are but fairies: this, our native home—

Our fairyland—rests on a cloud which floats

Hither and thither as the breezes will.

We see the world; yet, saving that it is

A very wicked world, we know it not.

But on the lands o'er which our island hangs

We shed fair gifts of plenty and good-will,

Drop tears of love upon the thirsty earth

And shower fair water on the growing grain.

This is our mission.

*Phyllon.* 'Tis a goodly one!

But tell me now—why have you summoned us?

*Selene.* Because we seek to teach you solemn truths

That now ye wot not of, poor gentlemen!

(*Tenderly.*) Poor gentlemen! Poor wayward gentlemen!

## SONG.—SELENE.

Poor, purblind, untaught youths,  
 We seek to teach ye truths  
 Which now ye wot not of, as we suppose !  
 Our aid ye sorely need,  
 For ye are frail indeed—  
 Each a poor fragile reed  
 Swayed to and fro by every breeze that blows !

[*Taking his hand and stroking it tenderly.*

And we are good and pure,  
 Safe from temptation's lure.  
 (There are no tempters to disturb our rest !)  
 Unknown the fierce delights  
 That lure attractive knights  
 Into disastrous plights !

(*Aside to ZAYDA.*)

*All.* They are attractive, it must be confessed !  
 Though worldly passions animate each breast,  
 They are attractive, it must be confessed !

*Selene.* Poor maidens to deceive  
 A potent spell ye weave,  
 To which those all-too-willing victims yield !

[*Kissing his hand.*

We fairies hope to show  
 The ills that from it flow,  
 And teach you to forego  
 The marvellous enchantment that ye wield.

[*Gently stroking his face.*

Homeward returning then,  
 Pure, simple, guileless men,  
 Warn all poor maids with whom ye are in touch  
 (Would they live free from harm)  
 To shun, in wild alarm,  
 Your strange mysterious charm !

(*Aside to ZAYDA, sighing.*)

*All.* The maids may shun it, but I doubt it much.  
 Would ye escape the plights  
 That spring from love's delights,  
 Shun all attractive knights !

(*Aside to each other, sighing.*)

The maids may do so, but I doubt it much !

[*During SELENE's song and the chorus, DARINE, ZAYDA, and others have been dealing tenderly with PHYLLON. All show that they are deeply impressed by the two knights.*

ENSEMBLE.—SIR ETHAIS and SIR PHYLLON (*nudging each other*).

*Phyllon.*

With keen remorse  
 We tell you penitentially,  
 Our lives are coarse  
 And villainous essentially—

- But bred and born  
 In pagan Principality,  
 We view with scorn  
 Our former immorality.  
*Ethais.* Of blameless state  
 We've hope infinitesimal  
 (We calculate  
 Its value to a decimal),  
 Unless at once  
 You give, experimentally,  
 Each wayward dunce  
 A polish-up, parentally !
- Phyllon (to ETHAIS).* This humble pie  
 Is but a tough comestible  
 Which he and I  
 Find rather indigestible !
- Ethais (to SELENE).* That's just his way—  
 An ill-bred Oriental man.  
 Forgive him, pray—  
 Of course he's not a gentleman !
- Phyllon.* My penitence  
 Perhaps is unconventional.
- Ethais (to SELENE).* Don't take offence—  
 I'm sure it's unintentional.
- Both.* We both are bound  
 For fairy course probational ;  
 So pray expound  
 Your system educational !

TRIO.—DARINE, ZAYDA, and LOCRINE.

Oh, gentle knights, with joy elate,  
 We'll teach you to abjure  
 All earthly dross, and cultivate  
 The blameless and the pure !  
 Be docile pupils in our school,  
 While we, with earnest heart,  
 Of all that's good and beautiful  
 The principles impart !

RECIT.—SELENE.

If my obedient pupils you would be,  
 You must avow your loyalty to me.  
 No doubt you recognize  
 Some formula, word-wise,  
 That binds your heart in solemn fealty ?

COUPLETS.—SIR ETHAIS and SELENE.

- Ethais.* When homage to his Queen a subject shows  
 (A Queen that's duly crowned),  
 He puts his arm around  
 That monarch's waist—like this, . . . [Doing so.  
 And plants a very long and tender kiss

Sometimes upon her cheeks of creamy rose,  
But, preferably, just below the nose!

*Chorus.* There is some reason—so we must suppose—  
Why preferably, just below the nose?

*Phyllon.* A still more binding process I propose:

For though no doubt it's true

One formal kiss might do,

Administered like this, [*Kissing DARINE on cheek.*

The pledge works more effectively, I wis,

When several dozen kisses he bestows—

Placed preferably just below the nose!

*Chorus.* I hope he'll tell us all before he goes

Why preferably just below the nose?

*Darine* (*aside to SELENE*).

A simple kiss a simple friendship shows.

'Tis an insipid thing

That no delight can bring,

Placed on the brow—like this.

[*Kisses SELENE's brow.*

Yet on these gentle knights' hypothesis

Some unexpected virtue 'twill disclose,

Placed preferably just below the nose!

*Chorus.* Some explanation certainly he owes—

Why preferably just below the nose?

*Selene.* Our outlook widens as experience grows.

That form is quite unknown

In our ethereal zone—

A kiss is but a kiss.

Yet if these knights be surely bound by this,

There is no need to ask them to disclose

Why preferably just below the nose?

*Chorus.* Still there's some reason—so we must suppose—

Why preferably just below the nose.

*Selene.* That form is not in vogue in Fairyland.

Still, as it holds on earth, no doubt 'twill have

Far greater weight with you, poor sons of earth,

Than any formula we could impose.

*Ethais.* Its weight is overpowering! [*About to kiss her.*

*Selene?* But stay—

We would not wrest this homage from you, sir.

Or give it willingly, or not at all.

*Phyllon.* Most willingly, fair Queen, we give to you!

*Selene.* Good—then proceed.

[*SIR ETHAIS kisses SELENE. SIR PHYLLON kisses DARINE.*

*Ethais.* There—does it not convey  
A pleasant sense of influence?

*Selene.* It does.  
(To *DARINE.*)

Some earthly forms seem rational enough!  
[*SIR ETHAIS staggers as though about to faint.*  
Why, *Ethais*, what ails thee?

*Ethais.* Nothing grave—  
I'm weak from loss of blood. Here, take this scarf,  
And bind it round my arm—so—have a care!  
There, that will do till I return to earth,  
Then *Lutin*, who's a very skilful leech,  
Shall doctor it.

*Selene (amazed).* Didst thou say *Lutin*?

*Ethais.* Yes.

*Darine.* How strange. *Sir Ethais* has a *Lutin* too!

*LUTIN has entered unobserved.*

*Ethais.* Yes, he's my squire—a poor half-witted churl,  
Who shudders at the rustling of a leaf.  
He hath a potion that will heal my wound,  
A draught whose power works instantaneously.  
Were he here I should soon—  
[*Sees FAIRY LUTIN, who has entered unobserved.*

Why, here he is!

By all the gods, pranked out in masquerade!  
(To *LUTIN.*) Give me the potion!

*Lutin (in amazement).* Give thee what?

*Ethais (impatiently).* 'The draught!

Dost thou not see my wound?

*Lutin (contemptuously).* I have no draught!

*Ethais.* Thou scurvy rogue,  
I bade thee never leave thy home without it!  
Thy hide shall pay!

*Lutin.* Who is this insolent?

A mortal here in Fairyland?

*Lochrine.* Yes—two!

*Lutin.* Who are these men?

*Selene.* The mortal counterparts  
Of *Ethais* and *Phyllon*. Look at them!  
Dost thou not love them?

*Lutin (indignantly).*

No!

*Cora.* How very strange!

Why, we all loved them from the very first!

*Lutin.* Is this indeed the truth ?

*Darine (demurely).* It is indeed.

Obedient to our Queen's command, we have  
Subdued our natural antipathies.

[*Fondling* PHYLLON.

*Zayda (demurely).*

They are our guests, all odious though they be,  
And we must bid them welcome to our home,  
As though e'en now they were, what they will be  
When they have seen what we shall be to them.

[*Fondling* PHYLLON.

*Lutin.* Be warned in time and send these mortals hence!  
Why, don't you see that in each word they speak  
They breathe of Love ?

*Selene (enthusiastically).* They do!

*Lutin.* Why, Love's the germ  
Of every sin that stalks upon the earth !

SONG.—LUTIN.

The warrior, girt in shining might,  
Knows, as he bares his sword,  
That, should he murderously fight,  
And cut and thrust and slash and smite  
(No matter wrong, no matter right),  
Love will be his reward.

The footpad nerves his coward arm  
With draughts of mead and mull,  
And stupefies his soul's alarm,  
And all his stealthy dread of harm,  
By pondering on the tipsy charm  
Of some poor tavern trull !

Oh, Love's the source of every ill !  
Compounded with unholy skill,  
It proves, disguise it as you will,  
A gilded but a poisoned pill !

Love instigates the brawler bold ;  
For love the lover lies ;  
The miser hoards ill-gotten gold  
To buy the prize, so lightly sold,  
That looks so warm yet burns so cold--

The love of two bright eyes !  
For lawless love the wife elopes,  
And blights her husband's lot ;  
For love denied the moper mopes,  
To toast his love the toper topes,  
With heavy heart the hoper hopes  
For love that loves him not !

Oh, Love's a poison foul and fleet,  
Nor is its horror less complete  
Because, with devil-born deceit,  
It looks so fair and tastes so sweet !

## RECITATIVE.

*Zayda* (to *ETHAIS*).

Nay, heed him not! A talé has reached our ears  
 That man is infamous in high degree,  
 And he believes it—so indeed did we,  
 Till we beheld you, gallant cavaliers!

*Darine* (to *SELENE*).

Send him to earth—then we can summon here  
 His mortal counterpart!

[*SELENE looks at her reprovingly. DARINE changes her tone.*

Another reed

No doubt who stands in very sorest need  
 Of virtuous counselling and guidance clear!

*Selene.* Well said, *Darine*! Thy words are words of worth.  
*Lutin*, begone at once!

*Ethais.* Return to earth!

Insolent varlet, get thee quickly hence!

*Lutin.* Oh, mortal plague! Oh, walking pestilence!

Listen and learn,  
 Oh, incarnation of uncleanness!

## SONG.—LUTIN.

Hark ye, you sir! On yonder ball  
 You've Kings and Queens to whom you fall,  
 And humbly cringe and creep and crawl,  
 Cast dust and ashes to your head upon,  
 That they some civil word may say to you.  
 Well, sir, there's not a King on earth,  
 There's not a Prince of royal birth,  
 Who would not barter all he's worth  
 To lick the very dust I tread upon—  
 And I'm the meanest here! Good day to you!

[*LUTIN goes up stage and prepares to descend.*

## CHORUS.

Good day, to you—  
 Away, to you—  
 That's all we have to say to you.  
 Don't stay, to you—  
 Delay, to you—  
 Don't hurry back, we pray to you.  
 Away, to you—  
 Good day to you—  
 Away!  
 Good day!

[*LUTIN descends. The Fairies then turn to SIR ETHAIS and SIR PHYLLON.*

## ENSEMBLE.

## FAIRIES.

Oh, gallant gentlemen,  
 You see our plight ;  
 Take pity on us, then,  
 And give us light !  
 Our prayer—ah ! do not spurn—  
 This we beseech :  
 We brought you here to learn—  
 Stay ye to teach !  
 We foolish fairies thought  
 Your guides to be,  
 But we are all untaught,  
 As ye may see.  
 Oh, gallant gentlemen,  
 You see our plight,  
 Take pity on us, then,  
 And give us light !  
 Take pity on us, list to our appeal  
 As humble suppliants at your feet  
 we kneel !  
 Oh, grant this prayer, all other  
 prayers above :  
 Teach us, oh, gallant gentlemen,  
 to love !

ETHAIS and PHYLLON  
to each other.

As gallant gentlemen,  
 We see their plight ;  
 We will take pity, then,  
 And give them light !  
 Their prayer we will not spurn,  
 So they beseech :  
 They brought us here to learn—  
 We'll stay to teach !  
 These foolish fairies thought  
 Our guides to be,  
 But they are all untaught,  
 As we may see.  
 As gallant gentlemen, (*to Fairies*)  
 We seek your plight ;  
 We will take pity, then,  
 And give you light !  
 In pity, then, we list to your appeal  
 As humble suppliants at our feet  
 you kneel !  
 We'll grant your prayer, all other  
 prayers above,  
 And show how gallant gentlemen  
 can love.

[*Some of the Fairies kneel at the feet of the knights, SELENE embracing SIR ETHAIS; DARINE, ZAYDA, and LOCHRINE hanging on SIR PHYLLON's neck. The remaining Fairies are grouped in attitudes of entreaty at the feet of the two knights.*]

## ACT II.

*Same scene by moonlight.*

*The Fairies, all but SELENE and DARINE, are discovered discontentedly watching the entrance to SELENE's bower.*

## CHORUS.

For many an hour  
 Within her bower  
 With Ethais philandering,  
 Our excellent Queen  
 No doubt has been  
 In roseate dreams meandering.



As a matter of fact  
 A risky act,  
 So obviously detectable—  
 So very unfit  
 We must admit  
 Is anything but respectable !

A Fairy Queen who dares conventionality despise,  
 To put it very mildly, is exceedingly unwise.  
 Here is an act to which we cannot close our eyes,  
 And must excite our indignation and surprise.

*Fleta (dialogue).*

Still, still Selene watches Ethais !  
 For six long hours has she detained the knight  
 Within the dark recesses of her bower,  
 Under pretence that his unhappy wound  
 Demands her unremitting watchfulness !

*Locrine.* This, fairies, is our Queen—the sinless soul  
 To whose immaculate pre-eminence  
 We, pure and perfect maidens of the air,  
 Accord our voluntary reverence !

*Zayda.* She is unfit to rule us as our Queen !  
 Her conduct is an outrage on her sex !  
 Was it for *this* that we proposed to her  
 To bring these erring mortals to our land ?  
 Is *this* the way to teach a sinful man  
 The moral beauties of a spotless life ?  
 Surely this knight might well have learnt on earth  
 Such mortal truths as *she* is teaching him !

SONG.—ZAYDA.

I never profess to make a guess—  
 That smacks of perspicacity—  
 Prophetical flight, my dears, is quite  
 A cut above my capacity ;  
 But such a barefaced display of taste  
 For military society,  
 The veriest dunce would deem at once  
 A horrible impropriety !

*Chorus.* A horrible impropriety !

*Zayda.* I always view  
 The acts unwise  
 My sisters do  
 With kindly eyes.

But, truth to tell,  
 Such conduct—well,  
 It smacks of impropriety !  
*Chorus.* It smacks of impropriety !

*Zayda.*

Though it seems odd,  
And may offend,  
'To kiss the rod  
I don't intend.

*Chorus.*

It wrong I call  
To kiss *at all* !

*Zayda.*

A capital rule of life, my friend !

*Zayda.*

Was it for this to realms of bliss  
We summoned such rascality ?  
Is this the way to teach him, pray,  
The truths of pure morality ?  
With wiles demure his love she'll lure,  
Caressing and beseeching him !  
No need to journey here to learn  
Such truths as she is teaching him !

*Chorus.*

Such truths as she is teaching him !

*Zayda.*

Though sure we are  
That every youth  
Should travel far  
To learn the truth,  
He might, with care,  
Have learnt, down there,  
Such truths as *she* is teaching him !

*Chorus.*

Such truths as *she* is teaching him !

*Zayda.*

You do not think  
Me too severe ?  
We should not wink  
At faults, it's clear—

*Chorus.*

We should not wink  
*At all*, I think.

*Zayda.*

A capital rule of life, my dear !

*Enter SELENE from bower.*

*Pleta*  
(*aside*).

At last she comes. (*To SELENE.*) We are relieved  
to find

That after such a lengthy vigil thou  
Canst tear thyself away from Ethais !

*Selene.*

Yes, he is sleeping now, but all day long  
He tossed and raved in wild delirium,  
Shouting for arms, and, as it seemed to me,  
Fighting his fight with Phyllon o'er again.  
I watched him through the long and troubled hours,  
Fanning the fever from his throbbing brow  
Till he awoke. At first he gazed on me  
In silent wonderment ; then, suddenly,  
Seizing my hand, he pressed it to his lips

And vowed that I had saved him from the grave!  
 Mark that—the grave! I—I had saved his life!  
 He told me that he loved me—loved me well—  
 That I had holy angel-eyes that rained  
 A gentle pity on his stubborn heart—  
 That I was fairer in his worldly eyes  
 Than all the maids on earth or in the clouds!

*Zaydu* (*spitefully*).

Could any words more eloquently show  
 The reckless of his delirium?

*Selene* (*surprised*).

Nay, he was conscious then.

*Fleta* (*very sweetly*).

No doubt he was.

But, sister, in thy triumph recollect  
 He scarce had seen *us*.

*Zayda*.

Thou hast wisely done

To keep *us* out of sight. Cage thou thy bird  
 Or he may fly to fairer homes than thine!

*Selene* (*amazed*).

What mean you, sisters? Nay, turn not away!  
 What have I done?

*Locrine* (*spitefully*).

Indeed we do not know;

But, lest we should affect his love for thee,  
 We will at once withdraw!

[*Exit LOCRIE curtesying ironically.*]

*Leila* (*politely*).

Good night to you!

*Neodie*. Good night!

[*Exit curtesying.*]

*Zayda*.

Good night! Remember, cage thy bird!

[*Exit curtesying.*]

[*Exeunt all curtesying.*]

*Selene*.

How strangely are my sisters changed to me!

Have I done wrong? No, no, I'm sure of that!

The knight was sorely stricken—he had died

But for my willing care! Oh, earthly Love,

Thou mighty monarch, holding in thy grasp

The holiest balm and most enduring woe,

Is it for good or ill that thou art here?

*ETHAIS* has entered unperceived from the bower. He is very  
 pale and weak, and his arm is in a sling.

*Ethais*. Selene, I am weak; give me thine hand.

[*She goes to him.*]

*Selene*. My love, thou shouldst not yet have left thy couch.

Come, thou hast need of rest.

- Ethais.* No, let me stay.  
The air revives me; I am strong again.  
And so thou trustest me?
- Selene.* In truth I do.  
Although I cannot tell thee whence proceeds  
This strange, irrational belief in thee—  
Thee, whom I hardly know!
- Ethais.* I see no marvel!
- Selene.* Nay, my love—reflect:  
I am a woman, and thou art a man.  
Well, thou art comely—so, in truth, am I.  
We meet and love each other—that's to say,  
I am prepared to give up all I have,  
My home, my very fairyhood for thee—  
Thou to surrender riches, honour, life,  
To please the fleeting fancies of my will.  
And why?  
Because I see in thee, or thou in me,  
Astounding virtue, brilliant intellect,  
Great self-denial, venerable years,  
Rare scholarship or shining godliness?  
No!  
Because, forsooth, we're comely specimens,  
Not of our own, but Nature's industry!

## BALLAD.—SELENE.

- Thy features are fair and seemly—  
A god among mortal men:  
I'm beautiful, too, extremely—  
Granting all this, what then?  
The cause is beyond my ken.  
I blindly thus reply:  
"Suppose we were fated  
To be separated,  
Assuredly I should die!"  
Oh, thine is the giving  
Of dying or living!  
I wonder, wonder why?
- Selene and Ethais.*  
The cause is beyond our ken, etc.  
A being of radiance rarer  
Is the Sun in his golden noon;  
Beyond comparison fairer  
The sheen of the silver Moon.  
Each is a God-sent boon,  
Fairer than you or I—  
But when they've departed  
I'm not broken-hearted,

I neither despair nor die !  
 The act of their setting  
 I see without fretting—  
 I wonder, wonder why !

*Selene and Ethais.*

The cause is beyond our ken, etc.

*Ethais.* I'll satisfy thy wonder in a word :  
 The face is the true index to the heart—  
 A ready formula whereby to read  
 The morals of a mortal at a glance.

*Selene.* Then, *Ethais*, is perfect comeliness  
 Always identified with moral worth ?

*Ethais.* The comeliest man is the most virtuous.  
 That's an unfailing rule.

*Selene.* Then, *Ethais*,  
 There is no holier man on earth than thou !  
 Take thou this ring—it is a pledge of love—  
[Giving him a ring.]  
 Wear it until thy love fades from thy soul.

*Ethais.* 'Twill never fade while thou art true to me.

*Selene (amazed).*

Are women ever false to such as thou ?

*Ethais.* Are women ever true?—well, not to me !

*Selene.* But these are earthly maidens, *Ethais*.  
 My love is purer than a mortal's love.

*Ethais.* Thine is no mortal love if it be pure.

*Selene (horrified).*

Then, mortal *Ethais*, what love is thine ?

*Ethais. (taken back).*

I spake of women—men are otherwise !

*Selene.* Man's love is pure invariably ?

*Ethais.* Pure ?

Pure as thine own !

*Selene.* Poor trusting, cheated souls !

#### SONG.—SIR ETHAIS.

When a knight loves ladye—  
 (Hey, but a maid is a sorry little jade !)  
 He sighs and he sings lackadaydy—  
 Hey, lackadaydy, O !  
 Of a love life-long  
 He'll sing a song—  
 (Hey, but a maid is a sorry little jade !)  
 Of a love supreme  
 He dreams a dream—  
 Hey, lackadaydy, O !

And little reck's he in his love-lorn soul  
 That, ere by and by, will the tocsin toll—  
     Ding dong! Ding dong!  
     Hey, lackadaydy, O!

When a maid grows weary—  
     (Hey, but a maid is a sorry little jade!)  
 O sad his heart and dreary—

    Hey, lackadaydy, O!  
 Then day by day  
 He wilts away—  
     (Hey, but a maid is a sorry little jade!)  
 With one sad sigh  
 He droops to die—

    Hey, lackadaydy, O!  
 Her love his life—both yield their due,  
 And the tocsin tolling tolls for two!  
     Ding dong! Ding dong!

    Hey, lackadaydy, O!

[*Exeunt ETHAIS and SELENE together into her bower as DARINE, who has been watching them, enters.*]

*Darine.* She leads him willingly into her bower!  
 Oh, I could curse the eyes that meet his eyes,  
 The hand that touches his hands, and the lips  
 That press his lips! And why? I cannot tell!  
 Some unknown fury rages in my heart—  
 A mean and miserable hate of all  
 Who interpose between my love and me!  
 What devil doth possess me?

*PHYLLON* has entered unobserved during the last few lines.

*Phyllon* (coming forward). Jealousy!

*Darine* (recklessly).

Maybe! What matters how the fiend is called!

*Phyllon.* But wherefore art thou jealous? Tell me now,

Have I done aught to cause this jealousy?

*Darine.* Thou? Dost thou love me?

*Phyllon* (airily). Love thee? Tenderly

I love all pretty girls on principle.

*Darine* (impetuously).

But is thy love an all-possessing love?

Mad, reckless, unrestrained, infuriate?

Holding thy heart within its steely grasp,

And pressing passion from its very core?

*Phyllon* (surprised).

That sort of thing!

*Darine* (*pityingly*). Alas, poor stricken knight !

Phyllon, my love is such a love as thine ;

But it is not for thee ! Oh, steel thyself

To hear disastrous tidings, gentle knight !

(*Melodramatically*.)

I love thee not !

*Phyllon* (*coolly*). Indeed ?

*Darine*. Is it not strange ?

*Phyllon* (*very quietly*).

Most unaccountable !

*Darine* (*disappointed*). But tell me now,

Art thou not sorely grieved ?

*Phyllon* (*very calmly*). Unspeakably.

*Darine*. But dost thou understand ? I love thee not ;

I, whom thou lovest, Phyllon, love thee not !

Nay, more, I love another—Ethais !

'Thou hast a rival, and a favoured one—

Dost thou not hear me ?

*Phyllon* (*calmly*). Yes, I am deeply pained.

*Darine* (*delighted*).

Thou art ?

*Phyllon*. Of course—what wouldst thou have me do ?

*Darine*. Do ? Hurl thyself headlong to yonder earth,

And end at once a life of agony !

*Phyllon*. Why should I ?

*Darine*. Why ? Because I love thee not !

Why, if I loved and found my love despised,

The universe should ring with my laments ;

And were I mortal, Phyllon, as thou art,

I would destroy myself !

[PHYLLON is greatly amused.]

#### DUET.—DARINE and PHYLLON.

*Darine*. But dost thou hear ? I love thee not !

*Phyllon* (*indifferently*).

Oh, yes, you put it clearly.

*Darine*. A favoured rival thou hast got !

*Phyllon*. I envy him sincerely !

*Darine*. And canst thou contemplate *Darine*

With *Ethais* fondly toying—

In fond caress and rapture keen,

His social charm enjoying ?

Unhappy *Phyllon*, think of this :

These eyes—they burn for *Ethais* ;

These lips—which thou shalt never kiss ;

This form—designed to crown his bliss !

*Phyllon.* Well, it's annoying !  
*Darine (anxiously).* It is annoying ?  
*Phyllon.* Yès, it's annoying !  
*Ensemble.* These eyes—they burn for Ethais, &c.  
*Phyllon.* The state of your emotions you  
 Delineate succinctly :  
 But, come—what would you have me do ?  
 Tell me the truth distinctly.  
*Darine.* Do ? Hurl thyself to yonder earth,  
 With sorrow unabated,  
 And end a life from hour of birth  
 To bitter anguish fated !  
*Phyllon.* I see your point, but (pardon me)  
 Did all heart-broken youths agree  
 In death to drown their miserie,  
 The world within a week would be  
 Depopulated !  
*Darine.* Depopulated ?  
*Phyllon.* Depopulated !

## ENSEMBLE.

## PHYLLON.

## DARINE.

Undoubtedly ; but (pardon me)	His difficulty I can see ;
Did all heart-broken youths agree	Did all heart-broken youths agree
In death to drown their miserie,	In death to drown their miserie,
The world within a week would be	The world within a week would be
Depopulated !	Depopulated !

[Exit PHYLLON.]

*Darine (looking off).*  
 Here comes the miserable, mincing jade,  
 With a fair speech upon her lying lips,  
 To meet the sister whom her evil arts  
 Have robbed of more than life. Oh, hypocrite !

## Enter SELENE.

*Selene.* Darine !  
*Darine (changing her manner).*  
 My sister—my beloved one !  
 Why, thou art sad ; thine eyes are dim with tears.  
 Say, what has brought thee grief ?  
*Selene (with joy).* Darine, my own !  
 Thou dost not shun me, then ?  
*Darine.* Shun thee, my sweet Selene ? No, not I !  
*Selene.* Bless thee for that ! I feared to meet thy face,  
 For all my loved companions turned from me  
 With scornful jest and bitter mockery ;  
 Thou, thou, Darine, alone art true to me !  
*Darine.* True to Selene while Selene breathes !  
 Come, tell me all thy woes.



*Selene.*

My Ethais—

He whom I love so fondly—he is ill,  
And I am powerless to heal his wound!  
Darine, my love may die!

*Darine (wildly).*

What can be done?

Oh, I would give my fairyhood to save  
The man thou lovest, oh, my dearly loved!  
But stay—the counterpart of Lutin is  
At once his herchman and his cunning leech:  
Lutin has gone to earth—cast thou this flower  
And summon mortal Lutin to his aid;  
He hath a charm to heal thy lover's wound!

*Selene.*

Kind Heaven reward thee for thy ready wit!  
My sister, thou hast saved both him and me—  
My darling sister!

[*Embracing her.*]

*Darine (aside).*

Oh, thou hypocrite!

*Selene.*

Fair rose, I name thee Lutin—go to earth  
And hither send the mortal counterpart  
Of him whose name thou hast, and may kind Heaven  
Prosper thy mission! Kiss me, dear Darine,  
For thou hast saved my Ethais for me!

[*Kisses her and exit.*]

*Darine.* No, not for thee, good sister—for myself!

[*Exit DARINE.*]

*Hurried music. Enter mortal LUTIN over the edge of the cloud, staggering on to the stage as though violently impelled from below.*

*Lutin (bewildered).*

Help! help! help! Whatever has become of me?

Help! help! help! Wherever am I now?

Help! help! help! Who's made a tee-to-tum of me?

When came I here, why came I here, whence came I here,  
and how?

Uprising with velocity

This impolite atrocity

Excites my curiosity—

But stay, I'm coming to—

But stay, I'm coming to—

But stay, I'm coming to—

I've gained my senses!

I've died a death deplorable,

For ever unrestorable,

And left my wife adorable

To weep, and pay my fu-

To weep, and pay my fu-

To weep, and pay my fu-

neral expenses!

Ha! Ha! Ha! Whatever has become of me? &c.

*During this the Fairies have entered, led by ZAYDA, LOCRINE, NEODIE, FLETA, and others. They examine him curiously and with much amusement.*

*Zayda.* A freak of Nature—not of Art!

'Tis Lutin, without wing!

*Fleta.* His likeness to his counterpart

Is most astonishing!

*Leila.* How beautifully formed is he—

How delicately quaint!

*Zara.* I wonder will he prove to be

A sinner or a saint?

*Chorus.* We wonder will he prove to be

A sinner or a saint?

We lay no stress

On blamelessness,

But still we wait

To speculate

On this—will he

'Turn out to be

A sinner or a saint?

*LUTIN (who has been much impressed with the beauty of the Fairies).*

Though I'm no Mussulman, it's true,

Yet by some strange device

My soul has found its way into

Mahomet's Paradise!

If this is all I have to pay

For my career perverse,

It might have been, I'm bound to say,

Considerably worse!

Considering,

I've had my fling,

'Tis very well;

For, truth to tell,

From what I glean,

It might have been

Considerably worse!

*Chorus.*

Considering

He's had his fling,

'Tis very well;

For, truth to tell,

From what we glean,

It might have been

Considerably worse!

[Exit ZAYDA.]

*Locrine (entering).*

Why, this is Lutin's mortal counterpart!

How quaint! How picturesquely rugged!

*Leila*

Yes!

Such character and such expression!

- All* (*admiring him*). Yes!
- Lutin* (*with conviction*). It's Paradise! Mahomet's Paradise!  
I'm comfortably dead, and all is well!
- Neodie*. Alas!  
This is not Paradise, nor art thou dead,  
Thou art in Fairyland! These are the clouds,  
And there's the earth from which we summoned thee.
- Lutin*. Of course! I recollect it all! A mist  
Enveloped me and whirled me safely here  
Just as my fair but able-bodied wife  
Began to lay my staff about my ears.  
That's all I know. I'm much obliged to it!
- Neodie*. Oh, tell me, are there many men on earth  
As fair and pleasant to the eye as thou?
- Lutin*. Not many—though I have met one or two  
Who run me pretty close!
- Locrine*. Tell us their names.
- Lutin*. Well, let me see—Sir Phyllon has been thought  
A personable man; then Ethais—  
He's fairly well.
- Neodie*. But these are *handsome* men.  
We love thee for thy rugged, homely face;  
Oh, we are sated with mere comeliness,  
We have so much of that up here! I love  
A homely face!
- Lutin*. I quite agree with you!  
What do a dozen handsome men imply?  
A dozen faces, cast in the same mould.  
A dozen mouths, all lip for lip the same,  
A dozen noses, all of equal length.  
But take twelve plain men, and the element  
Of picturesque variety steps in.  
You get at once unlooked for hill and dale,  
Odd curves and unexpected points of light,  
Pleasant surprises, quaintly broken lines—  
All very charming, whether seen upon  
The face of Nature or the face of Man.

## SONG.—LUTIN.

Suppose you take, with open mind,  
Twelve handsome men—what do you find?  
Twelve people, twenty-five years old,  
Twelve shapes, in even series;  
Twelve faces, cast in classic mould  
(A type that quickly wearies);

Twelve heads—the same from crown to nape,  
 In tedious iteration ;  
 Twelve noses—all alike in shape,  
 Without a variation ;  
 Two dozen eyes—all large and bright ;  
 Two dozen lips—all modelled quite  
 Like Cupid's bow—and underneath  
 Somewhere about three hundred teeth,  
 By average calculation.

This is a principle you may disseminate :  
 Good-looking men are effete and effeminate.  
 As for variety, they haven't got any—  
 Morbidly mild in their mawky monotony !

But take twelve *plain* men, and you find  
 Variety of every kind !

You've eyes that swivel—eyes that squint,  
 And dribbling eyes, and dozy ;  
 And mottled cheeks of every tint,  
 And hair that's red and rosy ;  
 You've mouths that grin and mouths that gape ;  
 Large ears that don't offend us ;  
 Uneven teeth grotesque in shape,  
 And noses, too—tremendous !  
 You've noses flat and noses snub,  
 Gigantic noses, noses club ;  
 You've noses long and noses short,  
 And some that snore and some that snort  
 With energy stupendous !

Why we're unpopular passes the wit o' me !  
 Each of his kind is a comic epitome,  
 Teeming with humours of dissimilarity—  
 Quite a museum of peculiarity !

*Enter ZAYDA unobserved.*

*Lochrine.* But stay ! Thou shouldst be faint for lack of food—

*Neodie.* Nay, let me minister unto his needs—

*Zayda (coming forward).*

Then go, beloved sisters. Gather fruits  
 And bring them here to him. Such frugal fare  
 Will have a daintier flavour than its own  
 When served by such fair hands !

*[Exeunt LOCHRINE, NEODIE, and the others.]*

*Zayda (changing her manner).* We are alone !

One word of caution—shun my sisters all !

*Lutin.* Are all these lovely girls your sisters ?

*Zayda* All !

Rejoice that they are not thine own.

*Lutin.* I do.

I very much prefer them as they are !  
 You're a fine family.

*Zayda.* Fair to the eye,  
 But take good heed—they are not what they seem!  
 Locrine, the fair—the beautiful Locrine—  
 Is the embodiment of avarice;  
 Darine is vain beyond comparison;  
 Neodie is much older than she looks;  
 Camilla hath defective intellect;  
 Maia's a bitter shrew, Colombe's a thief;  
 And, last and worst of all, I blush to own,  
 Our Queen Selene hath a tongue that stabs—  
 A traitor tongue that serves no better end  
 Than wag a woman's character away!

*Lutin.* I've stumbled into pretty company!  
 It seems you fairies have your faults.

*Zayda.* Alas!  
 All but myself. *My* soul is in my face;  
 I, only I, am what I seem to be;  
 I, only I, am worthy of esteem.  
 If thou wilt love me, I will dower thee  
 With wealth untold, long years and happy life,  
 Thou gallant churl, thou highly favoured boor,  
 Thou pleasant knave, thou strange epitome  
 Of all that's rugged, quaint, and picturesque!

*Lutin.* You don't take long in coming to the point!

*Zayda.* Forgive my clumsy and ill-chosen words;  
 We gentle, simple fairies never loved  
 Until to-day.

*Lutin.* And when you *do* begin,  
 You fairies make up for the time you've lost!  
 [*Twelve Fairies enter with fruit and wine. He sits and  
 they group round him as he eats and drinks.*]

*Neodie.* Hast thou a wife?

*Lutin.* Well, yes—that is down there!

Up here, I am a bachelor—as yet.

*Cora.* And does she love thee?

*Lutin.* Well—we *do* fall out.

We did to-day.

*Neodie.* And how came that about?

*Lutin.* Why thus, to tell the truth, between ourselves—  
 (*Whispering.*)

There was a lady in the case!

*Zayda* (*much shocked*). Hush, hush!

Such stories are unfit for maiden's ears.

Confine thyself to matters that relate

'To thine own sex. Thy master Ethais,  
He fought with Phyllon. What was that about?

*Lutin.* Oh, it's the old, old story!

*Iocrine.* Tell it!

*Lutin.* Well,

There was a lady in the case!

*Zayda (shocked).* Then stop—

Go on to something else. Where wast thou born?

*Lutin.* Why in Bulgaria—some years ago!

(*Whispering.*)

There was a lady in *that* case!

*Zayda (severely).* It seems

There is a lady, sir, in every case!

*Lutin.* In all those cases they do interfere!

[*Exit ZAYDA, offended.*]

#### SONG.—LUTIN.

In yonder world, which devils strew  
With worry, grief, and pain in plenty,  
This maxim is accounted true  
With *nemine dissente*:  
A woman doth the mischief brew  
In nineteen cases out of twenty!

*Chorus.* A woman doth the mischief brew,  
In nineteen cases out of twenty!

In all the woes  
That joy displace,  
In all the blows  
That bring disgrace  
On much enduring human race,  
There is a lady in the case!  
Yes, that's the fix  
We have to face—  
Her whims and tricks  
Throughout you trace.  
In all the woes that curse our race  
There is a lady in the case.

*Chorus.* Yes, that's the fix  
They have to face, etc.

If woman from great Nature's scheme  
Were utterly eliminated,  
Unruffled peace would reign supreme,  
No quarrels would be propagated.  
But that is a Utopian dream  
Of mortals unsophisticated.

*Chorus.* But that is a Utopian dream  
Of mortals unsophisticated!

It's true that foes  
 Might then embrace,  
 And earthly woes  
 Dissolve apace.  
 But where would be the human race  
 With never a lady in the case?  
 Yes, that's the rub  
 We have to face—  
 It gives a snub  
 That kills the case.  
 What would become of all our race  
 With never a lady in the case?

*Chorus,*

Yes, that's the rub  
 That kills their case, etc.

*Enter DARINE, unobserved.*

*Locrine.* And, Lutin, is thy wife as fair as thou?

*Lutin.* I thought her pretty till I looked on thee.

*Zayda.* Her hair—

*Lutin.* Is bright, but not as bright as thine.

*Locrine.* Her figure?

*Lutin.* Neat and graceful of its kind,  
 But lacks thy pleasant plumpness. Then besides  
 She has a long, loud tongue, and uses it;  
 A stout and heavy hand, and uses that;  
 And large expressive eyes, and uses them!

*Zayda.* And doth she know that thou art here with us?

*Lutin.* No, that's the joke!

The joke?

*Zayda.*

Of course it is!

*Lutin.*

*Zayda.* What joke?

*Lutin.* What joke? Why this: my lovely wife  
 Is just as full of devil-born jealousy  
 As woman's soul can hold! A pretty girl  
 Who comes within a hundred yards of me  
 Runs a fair chance to lose both eyes and hair!  
 If I address a well-proportioned maid,  
 My bones will ache for it a month at least!  
 Only the crooked, the palsied, and the blear  
 Are held to be fit company for me,  
 And even they must mind their p's and q's.  
 This comes of being quaintly picturesque!

*Neodie (sighing).*

I understand—I'm not at all surprised.

I should be just the same were I thy wife!

*Locrine.* And how's the lady called?

*Lutin.* Her name's Darine.

*Locrine* (*astonished*).  
Darine?

*Lutin.* Darine.

*All.* How marvellous! Darine!

*Lutin.* Why, what's the matter with the name?

*All.* Darine!

*DARINE*, who has entered, comes forward.

*Darine.* At last I've found thee, Lutin! Everywhere  
I've sought thee, high and low!

*Lutin* (*who stares at her in blank astonishment*).  
Merciful powers!

Are all my senses muddled, or is this  
A drink-engendered dream?

*Darine.* A dream? Oh, no!

*Lutin* (*staring incredulously*).  
Art thou indeed Darine?

*Darine.* Darine indeed!

Come hither, I would have a word with thee.

*Lutin* (*to Fairies*).  
You'd better go! There's going to be a scene.

[*Fairies retire up.*]

(*In great terror.*)

Darine, have mercy! Pray let me explain,  
These bold young girls, they are no friends of mine!  
Nay, hear me patiently—I know them not;  
They thrust themselves upon me 'gainst my will!

(*Crying.*)

Be merciful and hear before you strike!

*Darine.* I have no time to list to explanations.  
Attend to me, for this is life or death!  
Thy master Ethais—he fought with Phyllon  
And he was sorely wounded in the fight—

*Lutin.* My master Ethais? Is he in the clouds?

*Darine.* He is; his wound is grave and he may die!  
Thou hast a charm of wondrous efficacy  
(So Ethais says) to heal e'en mortal wounds—  
I bid thee give it me without delay!

*Lutin.* But tell me first—what means this strange disguise?  
How camest thou up here? And, above all,  
Why dost thou want to heal his wound thyself?

*Darine.* Why? Dost thou love thy master Ethais?

*Lutin.* Of course I do. What then?

*Darine* (*passionately*). Why, so do I! [*LUTIN horrified.*]  
Fiercely, unreasonably, recklessly!



With all the madcap torrent of a soul  
That love has never kindled till to-day!

*Lutin (aghast).*

Thou lovest Ethais? Great heaven and earth!  
Is the girl mad?

*Darine.*

She is! Mad as the moon!  
Hast thou no pity for a heart-wrung girl  
Who pines for love that thou canst help her win?

*Lutin.*

She must be mad! Oh, my beloved *Darine*!  
[*Throwing himself at her feet.*  
Don't break my heart—don't make my life a curse!  
I've been a faithful husband—more or less!  
And when I've earned a hearty cudgelling  
As I have, now and then,  
I've borne it meekly! Oh, *Darine*, my love,  
Do not forsake me. Treat me as thou wilt,  
I will bear all. Be thou but true to me,  
My masterful but well-beloved wife!

[*Weeping.*

*Darine (astonished).*

I am thy wife? Thy well-beloved wife?

*Lutin.*

Of course!

*Darine.*

Oh monstrous! (*Suddenly.*) Stay! There has been  
mistake;  
Some dreadful error! See, I've found the clue!  
Her name's *Darine*. Here, set thy mind at rest—  
No doubt I am her fairy prototype!

*Lutin (sobbing).*

Her prototype? And what's a prototype?

*Darine.*

Why, all the mortals on that wicked world  
Have prototypes up here, and I am hers—  
In face resembling her, and that is all.

*Lutin.*

'Then you are *not* my wife?

*Darine.*

Not I indeed!

*Lutin.*

You're sure of that?

*Darine.*

Quite sure!

*Lutin (embracing her rapturously).*

My darling girl!  
And I'm permitted to disport myself  
With these fair maids?

*Darine.*

Undoubtedly you are!

*Lutin.*

Kiss me again! [*Embracing her and giving her the  
phial.*

Here—take the phial. Two spoonful to the dose!  
I never was so happy in my life!

[*Exit DARINE triumphantly.*

## SONG.—LUTIN.

When husband supposes  
 His wife is a jade,  
 No bed of red roses  
 For husband is made;  
 But when he discovers,  
 His fears about lovers  
 So grimly abhorrent  
 Are quite without warrant,  
 With utter contrition  
 He sends to perdition  
 All silly suspicion—  
 His fears are allayed;  
 Ho, . . . (Dancing.)  
 Free from anxiety,  
 Free from timidity,  
 Ladies' society  
 Seeks with avidity—  
 Pleasant variety,  
 Perfect sobriety,  
 No impropriety  
 Or insipidity!

*Fairies (dancing).* Free from anxiety,  
 Free from timidity, etc.

*Lutin.* With keen satisfaction  
 And sense of relief  
 He feels a reaction  
 From trouble and grief.  
 His fears heavy-hearted  
 Have quickly departed.  
 He seeks in enjoyment  
 Congenial employment,  
 Surrenders politely  
 To maidens so sprightly,  
 They're all very sightly,  
 But this is the chief! (Indicating LOCRINE.)  
 Oh! (Dancing.)  
 Pure informality  
 Marks their civility—  
 Lovely locality,  
 Gems of gentility—  
 Happy fatality!  
 That it's finality  
 Seems, in reality,  
 Improbability!

*Fairies (dancing).* Pure informality  
 Marks our civility, etc.

[The fairies dance off with LUTIN. As they go off,  
 DARINE enters.]

## SONG.—DARINE.

Triumphant I! Here is the charm!  
 Now to devise a plan to gain my end:  
 If I restore his strong sword arm,  
 He will become my friend.  
 But will it gain the love  
 That I prize all above?  
 That all-enthraling love which I would fain  
 Yield up my very fairyhood to gain!  
 And how shall I attain that dream?  
 Oh, god of impudence, lend me thine art!  
 I have bethought me of a scheme  
 That should enchain his heart!  
 No matter sin or shame  
 So, I fulfil my aim—  
 The dictates of the heart must be obeyed.  
 So, god of impudence, lend me thine aid!

*Enter ETHAIS from bower. He is very weak and ill.*

*Darine (tenderly).*

How fares Sir Ethais?

*Ethais.*

Why grievously!

I am no leech and cannot dress my wound.  
 I'm sick and faint from pain and loss of blood!

*Darine (aside).*

Now for my plan!

(*aloud*) Sir Ethais, if Phyllon's words be true,  
 Thy wound is but a scratch!

*Ethais (indignantly).*

A scratch, forsooth!

The devil's claws could scarcely scratch as deep!

*Darine.*

He says—I don't believe him—but he says  
 That thou hast magnified its character  
 Because thou fearest to renew the fight!  
 He says thou art a coward!

*Ethais (furiously).*

By my blood

He shall atone for this! Oh, Phyllon, coward!  
 Why, a dozen times

We two have fought our battles side by side,  
 And I'm to quail and blanch, forsooth, because  
 We two at last are fighting face to face!  
 Black curses on this wound! Were Lutin here,  
 My sword arm soon would be in gear again!

*Darine.* Lutin is here!

*Ethais (amazed).*

Here? Lutin?

*Darine.*

Yes, behold! [*Shows phial.*

I have obtained this precious charm from him.  
 Now, knight, to show thy mettle!

- Ethais* (*furiously*). Give it me!  
Give me the flask!
- Darine*. One moment, *Ethais*!  
This flask is precious, and it hath a price!
- Ethais*. Name thou thy price, and I will give it thee—  
Take money, jewels, armour, all I have  
So that thou leavest me one trusty sword!
- Darine*. Nay, *Ethais*, I do not want thy wealth;  
I want thy love—yes, *Ethais*, thy love!  
That priceless love that thou hast lavished on  
My worthless sister!
- Ethais*. On *Selene*?
- Darine*. Aye,  
Thou lovest her, and dost thou think that I  
Will save thy life for *her*?
- Ethais*. *Selene*? Bah!  
True, she is fair. Well, thou art also fair.  
What does it matter, her fair face or thine?  
What matters either face, or hers or thine,  
When weighed against this outrage on my honour?
- Darine*. Give me that ring, and thou shalt have the charm!
- Ethais*. 'Tis thine. [*Gives ring and receives phial.*  
And now, Sir *Phyllon*, take good heed!  
[*Swallows contents of phial and is at once restored to health and vigour.*

## Enter SIR PHYLLON.

- Phyllon*. Why, *Ethais*—
- Ethais* (*furiously*).  
So I'm a cur, Sir Liar, and my wound  
Is but a scratch that I have magnified  
That I might shun the terrors of thy sword!
- Phyllon*. Hands off, thou drunken madman! Set me free!  
I never said these things!
- Ethais*. Thou craven cur!  
Dost thou then fear to reap before my face  
The crop that thou hast sown behind my back?
- Phyllon* (*contemptuously*).  
I am not wont  
To weigh the words I speak to such as thou!  
No need to taint *thine* honour with a lie;  
Why, *Ethais*, the truth is black enough!  
I know thee for a brawling tavern-bully,  
A hollow friend, a cruel unsparing foe,

A reckless perjurer, a reprobate,  
 The curse of women and the scourge of men—  
 Is not the *truth* enough, that I should grudge  
 The one brute-virtue of thy satyr-soul—  
 The instinct courage of a hungry dog?

[*ETHAIS is about to fly at PHYLLON, but checks himself and turns to DARINE.*

*Ethais.* Didst thou not tell me he had said these things?

*Darine.* 'Twas but an artifice to gain thy love!

[*Turns to PHYLLON.*

Forgive me, Phyllon!

*Phyllon.* Bah! release my hand—

Thou shameless woman, I have done with thee!

[*Exit PHYLLON. DARINE turns to ETHAIS imploringly.*

*Enter SELENE.*

*Selene.* Darine! Thou here alone with Ethais?

No, no—I will not doubt!

*Darine.* Doubt whom thou wilt,

Thou hypocrite! Thou shameless hypocrite!

Thou craven victim of thine own designs!

*Enter all the Fairies.*

*Selene.* Darine, what dost thou mean?

*Darine.* Doubt all of us,

For we are false to thee, as thou to us.

I am as thou hast made me, hypocrite!

*Selene.* Thou art to me as thou hast ever been,

Most dearly loved of all these dearly loved!

*Darine.* Away! Thou art the source of all our ill.

*Zayda.* Oh, miserable woman, get thee hence!

Thou art no Queen of ours!

*Darine.* Away with her!

Down with the traitress Queen!

SCENA.

*Darine.* Thou art the source of all the ill

That blights our Fairyland!

*Zayda.* Thine is the impious hand

That worked our misery, until

The very air we breathe

Was made to reek and seethe

With the accursed offence

Of plague and pestilence!

*Darine.* Bow thee unto the storm that lowers !  
 Away ! thou art no Queen of ours !  
*All.* Away, thou art no Queen of ours !  
 Give place to our *Darine* !  
 Bow thee unto the storm that lowers !  
 Down with the traitress Queen !  
*Zayda.* 'Tis true we counselled thee to call  
 These mortals here from earth.  
 'Twas but to test thy worth !  
 We knew too well that thou wouldst fall,  
 As thou indeed hast done. .  
 Thy subjects every one  
 Thine infamy has seen,  
 Thou sorry, sorry Queen !

*Darine, Zayda, Locrine, and Neodie.*

Thou hast abused thy royal powers !  
 Away ! thou art no Queen of ours !  
*All.* Away ! thou art no Queen of ours !  
 Give place to our *Darine* !  
 Bow thee before the storm that lowers !  
 Down with the traitress Queen !  
*Selene.* So let it be, for I have proved unfit !  
 I had a trust—I have forsaken it !  
*All.* Down with the traitress Queen !  
*Selene.* Though my default was born of good intent,  
 Mine was the sin, be mine the punishment !  
*All.* Hail to our loved *Darine* !  
*Selene.* Bows in remorse the head that ye condemn.

[*Taking off her crown and placing it on DARINE.*

Well loved *Darine*, wear thou this diadem !  
 Down with the traitress Queen !  
*All.* See, my beloved sister-maidens, how  
*Selene.* Imperially it rests upon her brow !  
*All.* Hail to our loved *Darine* !  
 Thou art our Queen,  
 Beloved *Darine* !  
 In loyalty  
 We bow to thee—  
 We bow to thee  
 In loyalty,  
 Beloved *Darine*,  
 Henceforth our Queen !

[*The Fairies march round DARINE and make obeisance to her.*

*Darine.* So may I fall if I forsake my trust !  
 Thy punishment is just. Thou wast a Queen !  
 What art thou now ?  
*Selene.* I have a kingdom yet !  
 I have a kingdom here in *Ethais'* heart.  
 A kingdom ? Nay, a world—my world—my world !

A world where all is pure and good and brave—  
 A world of noble thought and noble deed—  
 A world of brave and gentle chivalry—  
 A very goodly and right gallant world !  
 This is my kingdom, for I am its Queen !

[*Turning to ETHAIS, who comes down.*

*Darine.* Thou art no Queen of his, for he is mine ;  
 Aye, by the token that thou gavest him,  
 'Thou fond and foolish maiden ! [Showing ring.

*Selene (looking at it).* No, no, no !

It is a counterfeit ! No, no, *Darine* !  
 The punishments of Heaven are merciful !

[*Takes ETHAIS' hand to kiss it ; she sees that the ring is not there.*

Oh, *Ethais* !

Is that the ring with which I plighted thee ?

*Ethais (sullenly).*

Aye, that's the bauble. I have naught to say !

*Selene (to DARINE).*

It fell from him ! Where didst thou find it ? Speak !

*Ethais.*

I sold it for a charm, that I might have  
 An arm to flog a lying cur withal ;  
 A traitor devil, whose false breath had blurred  
 My knightly honour—dearer to my heart  
 Than any love of woman, hers or thine !  
 I had no choice, my honour was at stake !

*Selene.*

Thine honour ! Thou dost well to speak of that !  
 Can devils take the face and form of gods ?  
 Are truth and treachery so near akin  
 That one can wear the other's countenance ?  
 Are all such men as thou ? Or art thou not  
 Of thine accursed race the most accursed ?  
 Why, honourable sir, thou art a knight  
 Who wars with womankind ! Thy panoply  
 A goodly form, smooth tongue, and fair, false face ;  
 Thy shield a lie, thy weapon an embrace.  
 The emblem of thy skill a broken heart !  
 Thine is a gallant calling, *Ethais* !  
 Thou manly knight—this soul of chivalry—  
 Thou most discreet and prudent warrior !

[*He approaches her.*

Away, and touch me not ! My nature's gone !

May Heaven rain down her fury on thy soul !

May every fibre in that perjured heart

Quiver with love for one who loves thee not !

May thine untrammelled soul at last be caught  
And fixed and chained and riveted to one  
Who, with the love of Heaven upon her lips,  
Carries the hate of Hell within her heart!

*Ethais.* Stay! Hear me out.

'Tis true I trifled with thy love, but then  
Thy love is not as mortal woman's love.  
I did not know that it would move thee thus!

*Selene.* Thou didst not know!

Art thou so dull that thou canst understand  
No pain that is not wreaked upon *thy* frame?  
Hast thou no knowledge of the form of woe  
That comes of cheated hopes and trampled hearts?

*Ethais.* Nay, hear me. I have wronged thee bitterly;  
I will atone for all

*Selene.* Thou shalt atone.

SONG.—SELENE.

Hark ye, sir knight. I'll yield my fairy state,  
That I may follow thee to yonder earth,  
And join the whispering band of hidden hate  
Who feed on falsehood and who war with worth;  
The busy band who stab in secrecy;  
The blighting band within whose lips is hung  
The deadliest weapon of earth's armoury!  
A woman's tongue—a woman's blighting tongue!  
The talisman I will so deftly wield  
To twist and turn and torture good to ill,  
That, were it in thy traitor heart to yield  
To holy deeds of peace and calm goodwill,  
Those deeds should seem of holiness bereft,  
From every form of righteousness averse—  
Thy peace a war—thy charity a theft—  
Thy calm a fury and thy prayer a curse!

[*She throws herself on a bank exhausted.*]

*Enter* LOCRINE.

*Locrine.* Selene, see!

Through the far distant air with rapid flight  
Our absent brothers wing their way to us!  
These mortals must return to our own earth!

*ZAYDA and LUTIN and other Fairies have entered.*

*Lutin* (*shaking them off*).

Now, by my head, but this is welcome news!

*Zayda* (*horrified*).

Return to earth? No, Lutin, no—not yet!  
Life without Lutin, what can that be worth?



*Lutin.* I cannot tell you, for I never tried.  
 Nay, seek not to detain me, I've reformed!  
 And had I not,  
 I don't think I could much enjoy myself  
 In the distracting company of one  
 Who, if she's not in point of fact my wife,  
[Alluding to DARINE.]  
 Is so uncomfortably like my wife  
 That she may be my wife for aught I know!

*Enter PHYLLON.*

*Phyllon.* Come, Ethais, Lutin, come, to earth again!  
[PHYLLON descends with LUTIN. ETHAIS is about to follow them, but is detained by SELENE.]

*Selene.* No, no! Thou shalt not go—thou shalt not go!  
 My hope—my shattered hope, but still my hope!  
 My love—my blighted love, but still my love!  
 My life—my ruined life, but still my life!  
 I'll work and toil for thee—I'll be thy slave—  
 Thine humble, silent, and submissive slave!

*(Furiously.)*

Nay, but I'll hold thee back! I have the strength  
 Of fifty women! See, thou canst not go!

*(With passionate triumph.)*

Nay, but I'll wrest thy love away from thee  
 And fetter it in bondage to my heart!  
 I will be one with thee; I'll cling to thee  
 And thou shalt take me to that world of thine!

*Ethais.* Take thee to earth? I love the world too well  
 To curse it with another termagant!  
 We have enough of them. Release me, fool—  
 Away from me! I go to that good world  
 Where women are not devils till they die!

[Throws off SELENE, who falls senseless. He leaps through the cloud and descends. As ETHAIS disappears the Fairies, who have grouped themselves about the stage in attitudes of despair, appear gradually to wake as from a dream. The moon has disappeared, heavy thunderclouds that have gradually gathered during the preceding scene suddenly disperse, the stage grows light, and the music becomes soft and hymn-like.]

*Selena.* Where am I? Zayda! Neodie! Darine!  
 Oh, sisters, I am waking from a dream—

A fearful dream—a dream of evil thoughts,  
Of mortal passion and of mortal hate!  
I thought that Ethais and Phyllon too  
Had gone to mid-earth—

*Zayda.* Nay, it was no dream—

A sad and sorrowful reality!  
Yes, we have suffered much, but, Heaven be praised,  
These mortal men have gone to their own earth  
And taken with them the bad influence  
That spread like an infection through our ranks.  
See, we are as we were! *[Embracing her.]*

*Selene.* Darine! Darine!

My well-beloved sister, speak to me!

*Darine (shamefacedly).*

I dare not speak to thee—I have no words—  
I am ashamed!

*Selene.* Oh, sister, let that shame

Hang heavily on all, for all have sinned!  
Oh, let us lay this lesson to our hearts!  
Let us achieve our work with humbled souls,  
Free from the folly of self-righteousness.  
Behold, is there so wide a gulf between  
The humbled wretch who, being tempted, falls,  
And that good man who rears an honoured head  
Because temptation has not come to him?  
Shall we, from our enforced security  
Deal mercilessly with poor mortal man,  
Who struggles, single-handed, to defend  
The demon-leaguered fortress of his soul?  
Shall we not rather, seeing how we fell,  
Give double honour to the champion who  
Throughout his mortal peril holds his own,  
E'en though  
His walls be somewhat battered in the fight?  
Oh, let us lay this lesson to our hearts!

*Enter LUTIN followed by ETHAIS and PHYLLON as Fairies.*

*Lutin.* Your brothers have returned!

*Selene.* My Ethais!

*Ethais.* Selene—sisters all—rejoice with us!  
We bear the promise of a priceless gift,  
A source of new and endless happiness!  
Take every radiant blessing that adorns  
Our happy land, and all will pale before

The lustre of this precious privilege.  
It is—that we may love as mortals love!

*Selene.* No, no—not that! No, Ethais, not that!  
It is a deadly snare—beware of it!  
Such love is for mankind and not for us.  
No, Ethais, we will not have this love!

CHORUS.

Pure as the air, sweet as the morning dew,  
Reigneth our Queen!  
Bright in our eyes as Heaven's ethereal blue,  
Reigneth our Queen!  
Spirit of love! as thou hast ever been,  
Be to us evermore, oh, sister-Queen!  
Unsullicd source  
Of tranquil joy,  
Pursue thy course  
Of pure employ—  
Be thou as thou hast ever been,  
Our all-beloved sister-Queen!

[*DARINE removes the crown from her head and places it on SELENE. The Fairies all kneel in adoration at SELENE's feet.*

CURTAIN.

# THE GENTLEMAN IN BLACK.

*A MUSICAL PLAY.*

WRITTEN BY W. S. GILBERT.

COMPOSED BY FREDERIC CLAY.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE BARON OTTO VON SCHLACHENSTEIN	MR. DANVERS.
GRUMPPF, <i>his Steward</i> ... ..	MR. TERROTT.
HANS GOPP, <i>a Villager</i> ... ..	MISS E. FOWLER.
THE GENTLEMAN IN BLACK ... ..	MR. FLOCKTON.
TINTELSTEIN, <i>Syndic of Schlachenschloss</i> ...	MR. F. ROBSON.
SCHLIPPS, <i>an Innkeeper</i> ... ..	MR. HERBERT.
BERIHA... ..	MISS EMMELINE COLE.
THE BARONESS VON SCHLACHENSTEIN ...	MISS MAXSE.
MARIA } <i>Market Girls.</i> { ... ..	MISS DALTON.
GRETCHEN } ... ..	MISS ROBERTS.
EMMA ... ..	MISS WILSON.

### ACT I.

#### MARKET PLACE OF A GERMAN VILLAGE.

### ACT II.

#### GATES OF CASTLE SCHLACHENSCHLOSS.

Time in Representation : One Hour and a Half.

COSTUMES—DATE ABOUT 1584.

# THE GENTLEMAN IN BLACK.

## ACT I.

SCENE.—*Market Place of a German Village. The Golden Flagon Inn at back of stage. The Syndic's house, R. Chorus of MARKET GIRLS, assembled in honour of BERTHA'S betrothal to HANS.*

### OPENING CHORUS.

To-day young Hans  
Matures his plans,  
And pretty Bertha gratifies his whim.  
Some men prefer  
A girl like her,  
But girls should not endure a man like him.  
An ugly chap  
Not worth a rap,  
He's very far from bright; not over tall.  
My future spouse  
Must have a house—  
A cow as well, and several pigs withal!

HANS enters R. U. E. and is received by them with some ridicule.  
*He is a heavy, simple, idiotic fellow, but good-looking and honest.*

*Maria.* Well, Hans, so you are really going to be married at last?

*Hans.* Well, yes, it looks like it, don't it? (*Chuckles.*) But I've had a great deal of trouble to get Bertha to consent. First she would, and then she wouldn't—and then she couldn't—and then she shouldn't—and then she'd think of it—and then she thought of it, and then she seemed to like it—and then she thought of it again, and then she didn't seem to like it—then she thought she might do worse, and then she was sure that

she might do better—and when she found that no opportunity of doing better presented itself, why she closed with me, and here we are! [Chuckles.]

*Gretchen.* Ah, it was a sad day for us, Hans, when Bertha consented. What's to become of us now, I should like to know? We shall all die old maids!

*Hans.* Well, I could only have prevented that in one case, if Bertha hadn't consented. That is to say, in one case at a time!

*Maria.* Yes, but who knows but that that case might have been mine?

*Hans.* No, it wouldn't have been yours—I'm sure it wouldn't have been yours. I never liked you much. [Chuckles.]

*Gretchen.* Mine, then?

*Hans.* No. You're a very good girl, Gretchen, but you're not clever. Come, you know you're not clever. Now my wife must be very clever.

*Gretchen (angry).* Yes, she must have cleverness enough for two!

*Hans.* Yes, or she'd never catch me! [Chuckles.]

*Gretchen.* If she were clever she wouldn't want to catch you.

*Hans.* That carries out what I told you just now. You wanted to catch me.

*Gretchen.* I didn't.

*Hans.* Well, you said you did.

*Gretchen.* Ah, you mustn't believe all I say.

*Hans.* So I'm told.

*Gretchen.* Do you mean to say people tell you that I tell stories?

*Hans.* Oh, no, not exactly stories, that's not the word.

*Gretchen.* What is the word, then?

*Hans.* Lies! [Chuckles.]

*Gretchen.* Abominable! I'll pay you out for this, Hans. I'll give a party on our wedding-day, and invite all the young men. Bertha will be disconsolate.

*Hans.* Oh, Bertha won't mind. She isn't selfish, and she knows you want 'em more than she does.

*Maria.* There's a good deal of truth in that.

*Gretchen.* Is there? I disagree with you.

*Maria.* Yes, dear; you're like a Strasburg sausage, you disagree with everybody. As for the truth, I don't believe you know it when you hear it.

*Gretchen.* I don't often get the chance in this village!

*Maria.* No, your tongue's always going!

*Enter SCHLIPPS, from the Golden Flagon, in great terror. He shuts the door after him, and puts his back against it.*

*Theresa.* What's the matter?

*Schlipps.* I'm a weak man and 'a good man, and there's a strong man and a bad man coming after me.

*Emma.* A strong man and a bad man? Whom in the world do you mean?

*Schlipps.* A mysterious stranger! A person who has no right up here, on earth, I know. He's a supernatural person, my dears, and he dines off iron pokers and lumps of coal. He called for his dinner just now, and I sent it up to him—a beautiful roast turkey stuffed with chestnuts—well, he never touched the turkey, but he eat all the knives and forks!

*Emma.* Eat the knives and forks!

*Schlipps.* Yes, all of 'em, and then called for more! And when I said I hadn't got any more, he tried to collar me, but I escaped, and here I am. I'll go to the priest and the Syndic, and between them they'll make the place too hot to hold him. That is, if any place *can* be too hot to hold such a person. I believe the hotter it is, the better he likes it! (*Noise heard.*) Here he comes! Help me to hold the door!

[*All the GIRLS run to the inn, and assist SCHLIPPS in keeping the door shut.*]

*The GENTLEMAN IN BLACK walks quietly through the wall of the inn at a considerable distance from the door that the GIRLS are barring. He is eating a fork. He walks quietly down the stage, and addresses SCHLIPPS, who is quite hemmed in by GIRLS round the door.*

*Gentle.* Schlipps, I don't think your wife would like that.

[*SCHLIPPS leans against the wall in great terror.*]

*Hans (chuckling).* He hasn't got a wife!

*Gentle.* Oh yes, he has. A tall, stout wife, with yellow hair and freckles. Haven't you, Schlipps? (*GIRLS all recoil from SCHLIPPS in great horror.*) Her name's Martha, isn't it, Schlipps? And she has a fine, strong arm, hasn't she, Schlipps? And she uses it, don't she, Schlipps?

*Schlipps.* Well, my wife's neither here nor there.

*Gentle.* Yes, she is, she's there.

[*Points off R.*]

*Schlipps.* Where?

*Gentle.* Nuremberg.

[*SCHLIPPS runs off in the opposite direction, i.*]

*Maria.* How do you know that?

*Gentle.* I know everything.



*Gretchen.* I don't believe you.

*Gentle.* Why should you? Nobody believes you.

*Gretchen.* How do you know that? I mean, how dare you say such a thing?

*Theresa.* Gretchen may be a story-teller—but she has her good points for all that. She says so herself.

*Gretchen.* I never said so.

*Maria.* Then it may be true. (*To GENTLEMAN.*) Now tell me something about myself.

*Gentle.* Very good. That's not your own hair.

[*Touching a long plait that hangs down her back.*

*MARIA* (*in a great rage*). It's false!

*Gentle.* Exactly.

[*It comes off in his hand; all laugh. THERESA, GRETCHEN, and EMMA, quietly take off their plaits and put them in their pockets.*

*Maria* (*indignantly*). Give me that directly. (*Snatches it away.*) My hair always comes off in the autumn.

*Gretchen.* Perhaps you have some remark to make about my hair.

*Gentle.* Yes, beautiful hair, and all your own. (*Pulling end of long plait quietly out of GRETCHEN's pocket.*) With a reserve, to be used in cases of emergency.

*Gretchen.* I won't stand it. My mind's made up!

*Maria.* So's your face!

[*GRETCHEN and MARIA retire up, quarrelling.*

*Emma.* Now tell us something that's going to happen.

*Gentle.* Very good. You've heard of the wicked Baron Otto von Schlachenstein?

*All.* Yes, yes.

*Gentle.* Well, he's going to happen! He'll be here to-day on his way to his native castle, Schlachenschloss—twenty miles from here.

*Hans.* And who's Baron Otto von Schlachenstein?

*Maria.* The wickedest man in the whole world!

*Gretchen.* Yes, but there's something worse than that about him, he's the ugliest man in the whole world!

*Emma.* He's the most dreadful rake in the whole world!

*Maria.* Yes, they say that although he's so wonderfully hideous, no woman can possibly resist him. It's infamous that any man should possess such power.

*Emma.* Disgraceful!

*Theresa.* Abominable!

*Gretchen.* Yes, they say he only has to look at you, and there's an end of you!

*Hans* (simply). Of me?

*Gretchen*. Not of you, of course, of me—(All laugh)—that is, of any woman. It's abominable! Well, he'll be here in half an hour!

All the Girls. Oh, how nice!

[They check themselves and look demure.

*Hans*. Oh, dear! oh, dear!

[Crying.

*Maria*. What on earth is there to cry about?

*Hans*. Suppose he takes a fancy to my Bertha? Do you think she would resist him?

*Gretchen*. I don't know any girl with weaker powers of resisting temptation.

*Enter BERTHA running, L. U. E., as if pursued.*

RECITATIVE.

*Bertha*. Oh, my gracious!

All. What's the matter?

*Bertha*. How audacious!

All. What a clatter.

*Bertha*. Such a monster!

*Hans*. Oh, how frightful!

*Bertha*. Tried to kiss me.

All. How delightful!

*Bertha*. Then he chased me.

All. How audacious!

*Bertha*. And embraced me.

All. Yet how gracious!

*Maria*. Tell us, Bertha, what befell you—

*Bertha*. Gather round, and I will tell you. Listen. (Sees HANS.) No!

*Hans*. Bertha, what in the world is the matter? Who's been hitting you?

*Bertha* (coquettishly). I haven't been hit, I've been struck!

*Hans*. Struck!

*Bertha*. Very much struck!

*Hans*. Bertha, you've been flirting.

*Bertha*. No, I haven't. (Demurely.) I've been receiving attention from a gentleman.

*Hans*. From what gentleman?

*Bertha*. From—well, I shan't tell you. [HANS, in despair.

AIR.—BERTHA.

On second thoughts, I don't suppose

It matters much to you—

Your conduct very plainly shows

You do not think me true.

Why, I declare, you tear your hair,  
Because he touched his hat!  
If noble strangers think me fair,  
I'm not to blame for that!

*Chorus.* If noble strangers think her fair,  
She's not to blame for that!  
If my complexion shames the rose,  
I didn't put it there!  
I don't suppose I made my nose,  
Although I "did my hair."  
If noble strangers choose to think  
I'm good for looking at—  
And feel themselves compelled to wink,  
Am I to blame for that?

*Chorus.* If noble strangers choose to wink,  
She's not to blame for that!

*Maria.* Did he only wink?

*Bertha.* Oh, he did more than that—he put his arm round my waist and kissed me.

*Hans.* But you resisted?

*Bertha.* I couldn't resist!

*Hans (sulkily).* You can sometimes!

*Bertha.* Yes, but he's much stronger than you.

*Gretchen.* Is he handsome?

*Bertha.* He's the ugliest man I ever saw.

*Hans.* Then you've no excuse!

*Bertha.* His hair is a fiery red, and his nose is diabolical; he has little green eyes, and his face is covered with moles like little hat-pegs.

*Hans.* If she goes on like this with a man whose face is covered with moles like little hat-pegs, how far will she go with a man who hasn't got any moles at all?

*Bertha.* Some girls choose men as they choose old china—the uglier they are the better they like them.

*Hans.* I wish I was like old china.

*Bertha.* So you are in one respect—you're very much cracked! But although he is so dreadfully ugly, there's something very striking about his head.

*Hans.* There shall be something very striking about his head before he's half an hour older! Why what's the matter with the Syndic?

*Enter TINTELSTEIN, L. U. E.*

*Tintel.* Congratulate me, congratulate me.

*Hans.* We do—heartily. Why?

*Tintel.* At last I have an official duty to discharge. For

three years I have been Syndic of Schlachenschloss, and until this moment my office has been a sinecure. Not a nobleman has visited the village—not a quarrel has taken place between the villagers. My term of office expires in a month, and but for a glorious and wholly unexpected event which has just taken place, posterity would never have heard of me! The Baron Otto von Schlachenstein has just arrived on his way to his native castle, Schlachenschloss.

*All.* The Baron Otto von Schlachenstein!

*Bertha.* That was his name.

*Hans.* Whose?

*Bertha.* The man who tried to kiss me! Fly, fly, girls, or he may try to kiss you too, for pretty and ugly are alike to him.

*Gretchen.* Fly? We'd scorn the action. If innocence is to be insulted, flying won't do any good.

*Maria.* I should like to catch him trying to kiss me!

*Tintel.* Well, from all accounts you're very likely to have your whim gratified. But don't talk of flying—

*Gretchen.* We are not talking of flying.

*Tintel.* Because so great a man must be received with ceremony. I must go and put on my robes! When I took office I spent thirty thalers on those robes, and from that day to this I've never had an opportunity of wearing them.

*Gretchen.* And won't you speak an address?

*Tintel.* An address? I should rather think so! Listen, when the Empress was expected to pass through this village three years since, shortly after the birth of her two sons—twins—I prepared a speech and had it engrossed on vellum. Well, the Empress changed her mind and never came, so the address was never used. That speech shall be spoken now! With a little modification it will do admirably. Here comes the Baron, attended by his steward Grumpff. Receive him with the enthusiasm so great a man deserves—I won't be a minute! Come along, Hans, and help me with my robes.

[*Exit into his house &c., followed by HANS.*]

*Enter BARON and GRUMPF, L. U. E.*

CHORUS.

We hail you—

Regale you—

The flagon shall not fail you!

Amuse you,

And booze you—

There's nought we can refuse you,

*Baron.* Grumpff.

*Grumpff.* My lord.

*Baron.* Did you flog that postillion who had the audacity to faint on his horse?

*Grumpff.* My lord, I flogged him till I couldn't stand.

*Baron.* My own Grumpff! Grumpff, I love you. You're a man after my own heart.

*Grumpff.* No, no, my lord.

*Baron.* But I say yes.

*Grumpff.* I say no!

*Baron.* Potz-tausend himmel Sackerment noch emmal! I shall say yes!

*Grumpff.* Hier sprich mann schloppenhausen teufelspitz, I say no! Because—because—your lordship hasn't a heart to be after—ho, ho, ho!

*Baron.* Ho, ho, ho!

#### COUPLETS.

*Baron (to MARIA).*

How de do, miss! Who are you?  
Who are you? Who are you?  
You who smile with wicked wile,  
How de do, miss! Who are you?  
Glad to see you—who are you?

*Maria.*

My name's Maria, I am she  
Who shells the coy and bashful pea.  
Supplies the priest, and Syndic, too—  
Happy to do the same for you!

*Baron (to GRETCHEN).*

How de do, miss! Who are you?  
Who are you? Who are you?  
You with waist so tightly laced,  
How de do, miss! Who are you?  
Glad to see you—who are you?

*Gretch.*

My name is Gretchen; I'm the pride  
And boast of all the country side;  
I flirt all day—that's all I do—  
Happy to do the same with you!

*Baron (to THERESA).*

How de do, miss! Who are you?  
Who are you? Who are you?  
You with hair so long and fair,  
How de do, miss! Who are you?  
Glad to see you—who are you?

*Theresa.*

My name's Theresa, and I sell  
Grapes, and nuts, and figs as well,  
The villagers I sell them to—  
Happy to do the same to you!

*Baron (to BERTHA).*

How de do, miss! Who are you?  
Who are you? Who are you?  
You whose lips the rose eclipse—  
How de do, miss! Who are you?  
Glad to see you? Who are you?

*Bertha.*

My name is Bertha, I'm the miss  
You complimented with a kiss.  
You gave me one—a good one, too—  
Happy to do the same to you!

*Enter TINTELSTEIN from house, R., with address.*

*Tintel.* Welcome, my lord! Here is a small matter of an address, which I trust your lordship will condescend to hear. It is an address composed in honour of the expected visit of the Empress immediately after the birth of her little twins, but the Empress never came, and it's on my hands. But it has never been used, my lord, and is as good as new, and if your lordship will make a slight allowance for the different circumstances under which the address is presented, I think you will find that it will answer every purpose. Ahem! (*reads*) "Much respected and ever to be worshipped Madame!"

*Baron.* Eh? Potz-tausend aimmels Sackerment noch emmal! What's that?

*Tintel.* That referred to the Empress. "We, the Syndic of Schlachenschloss, dazzled by the surpassing beauty of your angelic countenance—overwhelmed by the extraordinary lustre of those melting eyes——"

*Grumpff.* That's the Empress's eyes.

*Baron.* It applies equally to our own. Proceed.

*Tintel.* It applies equally to his lordship's. I proceed. "Those melting eyes, find ourselves quite unable to congratulate you, in fitting terms, on your happy recovery——"

*Baron.* Recovery?

*Tintel.* That referred to an interesting event of a certain kind, which had recently occurred. But perhaps your lordship has been ill lately?

*Baron.* Not at all—never had a day's illness in all my life.

*Tintel.* I'm very sorry to hear you say so, my lord, for as the particular kind of illness from which the Empress was recovering isn't specified, I was in hopes that it might have applied to you. But I'll strike that out. I proceed. "We are happy to think that the cares of maternity do not so monopolise your attention as to prevent your honouring us with a visit——"

*Grumpff.* Bah!

*Baron.* That's all right. The cares of maternity do *not* monopolise our attention—it's quite right. Go on.

*Tintel.* Exactly; in the Empress's case they did, and she never came. "And in the devout hope that these interesting little strangers may only be the earnest of many many more interesting little strangers to follow, we beg to subscribe ourselves, madame, your most obedient and very humble servant, TINTELSTEIN, Syndic." I composed that myself!

*Baron.* Potz-tausend! but it does you credit.

*Tintel.* Allowing, your lordship, for the altered circumstances, I think——

*Baron.* Exactly—get out. This is a pleasant village, Grumpff; I shall stop here a fortnight.

*Grumpff.* Your lordship might do worse.

*Baron.* Which is the prettiest girl in the village?

*Grumpff.* This one, my lord. [*Indicating BERTHA.*]

*Baron.* Good, Grumpff! Are you the prettiest girl in the village?

*Bertha.* I believe I am considered so, my lord.

*Baron.* What's your name?

*Bertha.* Bertha Pomppopplesdorf, my lord.

*Hans.* At present, my lord.

*Baron.* Eh?

*Hans.* To-morrow she changes it.

*Baron.* Exactly—to-morrow she changes it—Syndic.

*Tintel.* My lord.

*Baron.* Draw up a marriage contract between Bertha Pomppopplesdorf and Baron Otto von Schlachsenstein.

*Hans.* Hore, I say——

*Tintel.* But, my lord——

*Baron (in a rage).* Potz-tausend himmel Sackerment noch emmal! Am I to be thwarted?

*Hans.* You are!

*Baron.* Potz-tausend himmel Sackerment noch emmal!

*Hans.* She's betrothed to me, and we're to be married to-morrow.

*Baron.* How blind are these poor earthworms! They design, and lo, they think they have completed! Potz-tausend himmel Sackerment noch emmal!

*Bertha (aside).* It will serve the jealous little donkey right to tease him for half an hour. (*Aloud.*) Baron, it is true that I am betrothed to Hans, in a sort of way—but—to be a baroness——

*Hans.* To be a baroness! But look at his moles! You couldn't marry a man with moles like hat-pegs!

*Bertha.* One can but try, dear Hans. If I find I can't marry him, I will marry you with pleasure—there! Come, Baron, and we will talk it over!

[Repeat chorus, "We hail you." All exeunt L. U. E., except HANS and the GENTLEMAN IN BLACK.]

*Hans.* That girl's going to throw me over! Life without Bertha, one long, long night!

*Gentle.* (coming forward). And life with Bertha?

*Hans.* One long, long day!

*Gentle.* You'd find one as monotonous as the other. But what is the matter?

*Hans.* Matter? Bertha has been and bolted bodily with a big, brutal, burly baron! That's all. [Sobbing.]

*Gentle.* Well?

*Hans.* That's what it is to be a baron. Rank is a fine thing! Ugly as he is, I wish I was he!

*Gentle.* Do you mean that?

*Hans.* Of course I mean that.

*Gentle.* Good. Are you aware that I have power of transferring the soul of one man into the body of another at will.

*Hans* (terrified). No!

*Gentle.* It's a fact, though. I can accomplish that metamorphosis whenever I please. At the end of the month your soul goes back to its proper body.

*Hans.* And who are you?

*Gentle.* The king of the gnomes. Country orders executed with promptness and despatch.

*Hans.* And if my soul is transferred to the baron's body, shall I become as wicked as the baron?

*Gentle.* That depends entirely upon yourself; you carry with you all your moral qualities, and, subject to them, you are a free agent.

*Hans.* And Bertha won't know anything about it?

*Gentle.* Certainly not. She will notice a curious change in the baron's voice and manner, and that's all.

*Hans.* It will be a change for the better. (Chuckles.) I agree. Go it.

*Gentle.* Go what?

*Hans.* Change me.

*Gentle.* Oh, but I must get the Baron's consent first.

*Hans.* Why?

*Gentle.* Why, if I take your soul out of your body, without finding room for it in the baron's, you will be what is called "dead." You may have heard the term?

*Hans.* I think I have.



*Gentle.* Good—then you know what I mean. Ah, here he comes.

*Enter BARON, L. U. E.*

*Baron.* Potz-tausend himmel Sackermant noch emmal! She don't care a bit for me! She loves that booby after all! She only did it to tease him!

*Gentle.* How do you do, baron?

*Baron.* Who are you, sir, when you're at home?

*Gentle.* Never mind who I am when I'm at home—you'll find out all about that some day. It is enough for you that I wish to be known as the Gentleman in Black. Come, you have fallen desperately in love with Bertha Pomppopplesdorf; she flirted with you in order to excite her lover's jealousy, and having done that she allowed you to see that she didn't care a straw about you. You are at this moment wishing you were that lover—true?

*Baron (amazed).* Quite true!

*Gentle.* I have the power of transferring your soul into his body for one calendar month—at the end of the month your soul reverts to its original tabernacle. What do you say? Shall I do it?

*Baron.* For one month only.

*Gentle.* Only for one month. This is the thirteenth August, 1584, on the thirteenth September your souls will revert to their proper bodies.

*Baron.* Agreed. Go it.

*Gentle.* Very good. Behold—I go it!

#### RECITATIVE.

Otto's body, grim and droll,  
Shrine young Hans's simple soul;  
Otto's soul, of moral shoddy,  
Occupy young Hans's body!

[*He makes passes, and flashes fire. HANS immediately assumes the ferocious demeanour of the BARON—the BARON assumes the loutish demeanour of HANS. N.B.—For the sake of convenience, Hans's body with the Baron's soul will be distinguished as the "False Hans," the Baron's body with Hans's soul as the "Real Hans."*]

*Gentle.* There, it's done! How do you like it?

*False Hans.* Potz-tausend himmel Sackermant noch emmal! This is a tight fit!

*Real Hans (chuckles as HANS did—looking in mirror).* What an ugly brute I am!

*False Hans (indignantly).* Potz-tausend! What do you mean by that? You're a devilish good-looking fellow, sir. Look at me! here's a sight! And I've got to go about like this for a month—and in these clothes, too! Potz-tausend himmel Sackermment noch emmal! [*Pulls at cloth of his coat.*]

*Real Hans.* I say, baron, don't do that—that's my best doublet, and it won't stand trifling with. By the bye, where do you keep your pocket handkerchief? Oh, I've got it (*uses it—a letter drops out of his pocket*). Hallo! what's this? (*reads*) "Dearest Otto——"

*False Hans.* Give me that letter, sir, immediately.

*Real Hans.* Oh, no—excuse me.

*False Hans.* It's from a lady, sir. Potz-tausend!

*Real Hans.* Can't help that. (*Chuckles.*) You should have emptied your pockets before you changed.

*False Hans (feeling in pocket, and producing bread and sausage).* What's this?

*Real Hans.* That's my dinner—at least, *your* dinner. You have meat for dinner to-day to commemorate your betrothal. You're in luck, Baron! [*Chuckles.*]

*False Hans.* Bread and sausage for a month! (*Enter BERTHA.*) Potz-tausend, but she's a lovely girl and I'll bear with the inconveniences of my position for her sake!

*Real Hans.* Bertha!

[*Runs to embrace her.*]

*Bertha.* Go away, you monster, I hate the sight of you. (*To FALSE HANS.*) Hans, I'm very sorry I treated you so badly, but it was because you were so ridiculous as to be jealous of that extravagant scarecrow! As if any girl could love a monster with moles like hat-pegs.

*False Hans.* H'm! his body isn't so bad, Bertha, but his moral qualities are contemptible.

*Real Hans.* Bah! I'm the ugliest beast on the face of the earth!

*False Hans.* You're not, sir!

*Real Hans.* I am, sir!

*False Hans.* Look at your nose, sir. There's a nose! There's character in that nose, sir! There's blood in that nose, sir! There's an eye, sir! There's a sonnet in every look—there's a leg! Potz-tausend himmel Sackermment noch emmal!

*Real Hans (feeling his legs).* Hallo! it's padded. (*Chuckles.*) Here's a lark! Oh, I say, he pads his legs!

*False Hans.* It's all stuff!

*Bertha.* Well, well, don't quarrel. It's quite enough for you, dear Hans (*to FALSE HANS*) that I think him repulsive. I've come to beg your pardon for flirting with such a monster and to

tell you that I am ready to marry you immediately, and be a good and faithful wife to the end of my days—there. (*Kisses him.*) 'There's an earnest of what is to come!

*Real Hans.* She never did that to me.

*False Hans.* Potz-tausend himmel Sackermant noch einmal!

*Bertha.* Eh? What an extraordinary remark! He's caught it from the Baron! Poor fellow, he thinks to please me by imitating the expressions of people of rank!

*Real Hans.* Bertha, listen to me: there's a great change, that you know nothing about and that I can't explain—

*Bertha.* A great change? Yes, I see there is a great change, but your hypocritical mildness will have no effect upon me.

*Enter TINTELSTEIN, MARIA, GRETCHEN, EMMA, THERESA,*  
L. U. E.

*Tintel.* My lord, the baroness has arrived!

*Real Hans.* Very good, it's no affair of mine.

*Tintel.* The Baroness Otto von Schlachenstein, your wife.

*Real Hans.* My wife? he, he, he! I like that!

*Tintel.* She says you have deserted her, and she has come with her five children to claim protection.

*Real Hans.* Five children! This is beyond a joke. I don't object to the wife—but five children—

*False Hans.* Potz-tausend! but this is a narrow escape!

*All (to REAL HANS).* Oh, you monster!

*Bertha.* And he tried to kiss me, and he's a married man!

*Maria.* With five children!

*Real Hans.* But, listen, I am not the Baron Otto von Schlachenstein, and I never had a child in my life.

*All.* Oh, oh!

*Real Hans.* I'm not, indeed! *That's* the Baron.

*Theresa.* *That?* Why that's Hans—

*Tintel.* However, here she comes.

*Enter the BARONESS with five little children, L. U. E.*

*Baroness (embracing REAL HANS).* Baron! Cruel, cruel, Baron!

*Tintel. (aside).* Here is an opportunity that may not occur again. Ahem! (*Pulls out his address and begins to read.*) "Much respected and ever to be honoured Madame, we, the Syndic of Schlachenschloss, dazzled by the surpassing beauty of your angelic countenance——"

*Baroness (pushing TINTLESTEIN out of the way).* Come home!

*Eldest Child.* Father, dear father, come home!

*Real Hans.* Here, I say (to FALSE HANS). [They cling round him.] These are your children, you know——

*Baroness.* Baron!

*Real Hans.* That's your husband, ma'am—take him and be happy!

*Baroness.* That my husband? Oh, Otto, I never set eyes on the young man before!

*False Hans.* No, never! Potz-tausend himmel Sackernunt noch emmal, she never set eyes on the young man before!

*Baroness.* And yet that exclamation! The Baron's favourite own!

*False Hans.* Exclamations are common property, ma'am. You didn't marry an oath, you married a man—a very good-looking one too. Take him and be happy.

*Real Hans.* It's all a mistake. Go away, you bold woman, and don't kiss me like that.

*Baroness.* Otto, come home!

*Real Hans.* I don't know who you are, but you're a very brazen person. I'm a single man, and consequently I haven't a family, and I must beg that you will remove these young persons directly.

*Tintel.* Stop a bit, here's a chance of recording a judgment at last! Have you any proof that this gentleman is your husband?

*Baroness.* Proof? I sent him a copy of my marriage certificate a week ago—to prove that I could get another if I liked.

*Real Hans.* Eh? [Feels in his pocket—takes out letter.]

*Baroness.* And there it is! See—my own handwriting—and here is more of it.

[Undoes his shirt collar, and reads marking on his shirt,  
"Otto, six."

*All.* "Otto, six!"

*Tintel.* It is indeed in her handwriting. Here is a strong *primâ facie* case. Let both parties appear before me to-morrow morning, and this matter shall be investigated!

*Baroness.* I'll go to the archduke, and compel you to receive me, or forfeit your estates. You know how strict he is in his own conduct.

*Real Hans.* Ma'am, the stricter he is in his own conduct, the less is he likely to approve your quartering yourself on a single gentleman. You're quite at liberty to go to the archduke—or any other potentate you please.

## CONCERTED PIECE.

*Baroness.* Monster, do you want to leave me?

You who swore you'd never grieve me?

Of your love at once bereave me—

Oh, alack and well-a-day!

*Baron.* Ma'am, I don't know what your game is,

Quite unknown to me your name is—

This dead set at me a shame is!

Naughty woman, go away!

*Bertha.* Oh, you monster unrelenting,

Listen to her loud lamenting—

Better be at once consenting—

Take her, Baron—take her, pray!

*Grumpff* (*aside to BARONESS*).

Money of me try to borrow

Till a verdict ends your sorrow

(Which will happen, ma'am, to-morrow)

In the cottage you may stay!

*Gentle.* This certificate I'm reading

Trumpets forth your evil breeding,

For your conduct thus unheeding

You will surely have to pay!

*Baroness.* Monster, do you mean to leave me?

You who swore you'd never grieve me?

Will you take me?

*Baron.* No, I won't, ma'am.

*Baroness.* Don't forsake me?

*Baron.* No, I don't, ma'am!

*Baroness.* Don't forsake me?

*Baron.* No, I don't.

*Chorus.* Monster, monster, monster, monster!

*Hans.* Baron, you're behaving sadly!

She adores you, fondly, madly—

You will disappoint her sadly:

Seek her in her sad array!

*Bertha* } Now she says she means to love you,

*and* } But it doesn't seem to grieve you

*Grumpff.* } Of her love she will bereave you

Oh alack and well-a-day!

*Baron.* She's no kind of wife of mine.

'Tis for her (*indicating BERTHA*) I sigh and pine.

*Bertha.* You've been drinking too much wine

Such a thing to dare to say!

*Chorus.* Baron, you're behaving badly!

She adores you, fondly, madly—

You will disappoint her sadly:

Seek her in her sad array!

*Baron.* I've been drinking? why how dare you!

*Bertha.* Don't be thinking I could bear you!

*Grumpff.* For a linking, pray, prepare you!

*Hans.* Chains are clinking to ensnare you!

*Gentle.* Stop your winking, she must share you!

*All.* Baron, you're behaving badly, etc.

[*At end of finale, BARONESS rushes off frantically L. U. E. leaving REAL HANS surrounded by children.*

## ACT II.

SCENE.—*Castle Gates of Schlachenschloss. (The market BOYS and GIRLS of Act I. discovered.) They are engaged in preparing a triumphal arch for the arrival of the BARON.*

## CHORUS.

In service, now, against our wills,  
Compelled, alas, to stop !  
We polish panes and window sills,  
And twirl the airy mop !  
With every kind of mortal dread,  
We bear the Baron's yoke,  
Contrast it with the life we led  
As happy market folk !

*Enter GRUMPPF, L. U. E., at the end of chorus, cracking a long whip, and carrying a roll of calico.*

*Grumpff.* Now, then, this won't do! This ain't business, you know. Come, the Baron will be here in a minnte, and the preparations for his welcome are not half finished. Here is the scroll which is to surmount the arch. It's my own composition. (*Unrolls scroll, "Welcome Little Stranger."*) Come, up with it.  
[*Cracks whip—they hang up scroll.*

*Maria.* If you please, we can't work if you crack your whip like that.

*Grumpff.* Why not?

[*Cracking whip.*

*Maria.* It makes us jump.

*Grumpff.* Ha! Don't you complain as long as you only got the crack of it.

*Theresa.* Why, you wouldn't hit a woman.

*Grumpff.* Wouldn't I? Why not?

*Gretchen.* What, hit a woman who couldn't hit you back again?

*Grumpff.* Why you don't suppose I'd be such a fool as to hit anybody who *could*?

*Gretchen.* Yes, I do.

*Grumpff.* Then you don't know me. No, no, the Baron keeps me to flog the women and children. All the strong men are flogged by machinery. But don't you abuse my whip: I'm very fond of my whip—I always have it about me.

*Gretchen.* You deserve to have it about you! And if you're so fond of it, don't give it to us. We don't like it.

*Grumpff* (*furious*). What's that ?

*Gretchen*. Nothing, I didn't speak.

*Grumpff*. You said that I deserved to have it about me.

*Gretchen*. I don't call that speaking, I call that thinking out loud.

*Grumpff*. Think to yourself then, or my whip will take to thinking out loud. And when it once begins it doesn't leave off in a hurry.

SONG.—GRUMPF.

No giddy flirt is this good whip :  
 If once it holds you in its grip,  
 Of fickleness you can't complain  
 It comes again, again, again ! (*Cracking whip.*)  
 You can't forget it—if you do,  
 Be sure it will remember you—  
 Its warm attentions will not wane,  
 'Twill come again, again, again ! (*Cracking whip.*)  
 A heedless whip—it little recks  
 Of beauty, figure, age or sex ;  
 If once it holds you in its rein  
 It comes again, again, again ! (*Cracking whip.*)  
 A democrat—prepared to strike !  
 The old, the sick, the weak alike !  
 Where once it's been, it's always fain  
 To come again, again, again ! (*Cracking whip.*)  
 [*Noise heard without, all come down hurriedly.*]

*Maria*. My dears, here's the Baron ? How do I look ?

*Gretchen*. Beautiful, dear—for you ! Oh, I'm in such a state of mind !

*Maria*. If he touches me, I shall pinch him.

*Grumpff*. Now, then, welcome his lordship—Hurrah !

*The others* (*very faintly*). Hurrah !

*Enter REAL HANS, L. O. E., preceded by four servants bowing and walking backwards. He carries two of the children in his arms, the others are hanging about him. (He still retains all the outward appearance of the BARON, with the manner of HANS.)*

*Grumpff*. Now then, take care, he's going to begin !

[*All very frightened.*]

*Real Hans* (*looking at the arch*). Oh, how sweetly pretty ! (*Holding up child.*) Look at it, Tommy, ain't it sweetly pretty ! (*GRUMPF makes a preposterous bow which frightens REAL HANS very much.*) Now look here, don't you hit me, I'm the Baron, and you must be respectful. If you're rude I shall be seriously annoyed.

*Grumpff.* Rude? My lord, I was making a bow.

*Real Hans.* Oh, I beg your pardon—but, may I ask who you are?

*Grumpff.* Ho, ho! That's good! Who am I? His lordship's joke! Ho, ho, ho! (*Aside to SERVANTS.*) He don't often joke—so laugh, or you'll catch it!

*Servants.* Ho, ho, ho!

*Real Hans.* Look here, I don't want to appear inquisitive, but I'm a stranger here, and I should like to know your name.

*Grumpff.* I've been ten years in your lordship's service, but if your lordship wishes me to mention my name, I'm delighted to humour your lordship's joke. It's Grumpff.

*Real Hans.* Grumpff, of course. Ha, ha! (*Aside*) I suppose I ought to have known that.

*Grumpff.* Ha, ha! He's been drinking.

*Real Hans.* It's my amusing way, my friends. (*Sees THERESA.*) Hallo, Theresa! Don't you know me?

*Theresa.* No, my lord—that is, I've seen you—

*Real Hans.* Seen me, that's a good 'un. (*Chuckles.*) Why I've driven you up to market every day these twelve years.

*Theresa.* Driven me? Oh, dear no! Hans drives me always.

*Grumpff (aside).* He's been drinking a good deal. (*Aloud.*) My lord, I've organised the servants of the castle. I had to engage villagers for the purpose, but I've spent a fortnight in drilling them into their work. They've done pretty well, but I've several complaints to make. This girl, Maria, burnt the toast last night.

*Real Hans (going up to MARIA, and taking her hand).* Ah, Maria, I'm so glad to see you, my dear! I hope they've made you pretty comfortable.

*Grumpff.* I've ordered her seven days' black-hole, and all her hair cut off!

*Real Hans.* What! Maria?

*Grumpff.* Yes. She actually burnt the toast!

*Real Hans.* Oh, dear me, you shouldn't have done that, Grumpff. You mustn't cut off Maria's hair, you know. Maria and I are very old friends, and I couldn't hear of such a thing.

*Grumpff.* Oh, he's mad! quite mad!

*Real Hans.* Any more complaints?

*Grumpff.* Lots! Theresa has dry bread and water for a fortnight.

*Real Hans.* Theresa fed on dry bread! Theresa, who had such an appetite, too? Ho, ho! Why what has she done?



*Grumpff.* Spilt the milk! A pint!

*Real Hans.* Oh dear, dear, you mustn't punish Theresa for spilling a pint of milk!

*Grumpff.* Not punish her?

*Real Hans.* Not on any consideration. Why how hungry she must be! Now look here, Grumpff, I'm sorry to trouble you, but you'll oblige me very much if you'll be so good as to fetch Theresa two or three nice slices of galantine and a bottle of—What would you like a bottle of, Theresa?

*Theresa.* Hock.

*Real Hans.* And a bottle of hock. Will you be so good?

*Grumpff.* Eh? Oh, of course, if your lordship wishes it!

*Real Hans.* You don't mind?

*Grumpff.* Oh dear no! not at all.

*Real Hans.* Well, trot along, Grumpff. Mind—the best hock!

*Maria.* Why, he's as mild as curds and whey! And Grumpff told us you were a devil!

*Real Hans.* The devil he did! Grumpff, did you tell these ladies I was a devil?

*Grumpff* (*aside*). Ladies! (*Aloud.*) Yes, my lord, I did. And so you are!

*Real Hans.* Oh, Grumpff, you shouldn't have told 'em that. That was very unkind of you, Grumpff. I wouldn't have believed it of you, Grumpff—I wouldn't indeed! Now, my dears, if you will be so good as to go into the hall, Grumpff will see that you have everything of the best, won't you, Grumpff? And if he doesn't, let me know, my dears, and he shall be discharged.

*Grumpff.* It's my belief I'm fast asleep and dreaming. (*Aloud.*) My lord, I don't know whether I'm asleep or awake—will your lordship be good enough to pinch me?

*Real Hans.* With pleasure, Grumpff. Where would you like to have it?

*Grumpff.* In the calf of the leg, my lord, if you don't mind—

*Real Hans.* Certainly, Grumpff—here? [*Pinches his leg.*

*Grumpff* (*screaming*). I'm awake!

[*Exit GRUMPPFF and SERVANTS laughing, L.*

*Real Hans* (*surrounded by children*). This is Bertha's wedding day! This morning she marries that fearful baron who's at this moment occupying my body! And he's a married man! And I can't prevent it! [*Baby cries.*

*1st Child.* Papa, baby's hungry.

*Real Hans.* I hear him, my dear, but I don't know what to

give him; I ain't used to children, my dear—it's very awkward. Do you think he would like a chop, and a glass of beer? Would it like a chop, then—a pickley wickley wee? I never *did* know anything about children. Take it away to Grumpff, my dear, and tell him to do all that's necessary. (*ELDEST CHILD takes baby, and all CHILDREN go off.*) Poor little things! It's a dreadful responsibility. Oh, Bertha, Bertha, what am I undergoing on your account!

*Enter BERTHA, R. U. E.*

*Bertha.* My Lord!

*Real Hans.* Bertha! you here? I came away here to get away from you. Your lover probably awaits you. You'd better go to him.

*Bertha.* Yes, my lord, but as you've engaged all my friends—as your servants, I've come to ask if you will be so kind as to give them a holiday this evening to enable them to be present at my wedding!

*Real Hans.* Are you not afraid to present yourself before such a bloodthirsty vindictive villain as I am represented to be?

*Bertha.* Oh, but everybody says you've changed so wonderfully in the past fortnight, that you're now just as mild and good-hearted as my poor Hans used to be!

*Real Hans.* Used to be?

*Bertha.* Yes. (*Crying.*) He's so strange now! He swears so dreadfully, and he gets tipsy every night—so tipsy! so—so—tipsy!

*Real Hans.* The dissipated beast!

*Bertha.* And when I won't sit on his knee—which I won't—I won't—I won't do—he pinches me!

*Real Hans.* The brute. I'll pay him out for this!

*Bertha.* Oh, it's all my fault; I was so unkind to him that it turned his brain. But I'm determined to make amends for my wickedness, and if loving-kindness can bring him round, he'll soon be all right again.

SONG.—BERTHA.

Ah, once he loved me blindly,  
 All other girls above!  
 I treated him unkindly  
 And sported with his love:  
 I smiled on others sweetly  
 And would not tell him why:  
 I broke his heart completely  
 A wretched girl am I!  
 Ah, me, a wretched girl am I!

His head is turned with sorrow :  
 He hates his dearest friends—  
 I'll marry him to-morrow,  
 And then I'll make amends !  
 The grief with which he's laden  
 I'll lighten all my life :  
 A gentle little maiden,  
 A loving little wife !  
 Ah me, I'll try to make amends !  
 Ah me, I'll try to make amends !

[Exit BERTHA, L.]

*Real Hans.* Poor little girl!—And to think that all that devotion, under difficulties, she lavishes on that senseless brute, is, in reality, my property! It's enough to make a fellow swear that he'll stick to his own body for the rest of his life!

*False Hans (without).* Potz-tausend himmel Sackerment noch! emmal! Where's your master?

*Enter GRUMPF, L. U. E. followed by FALSE HANS, whom he is endeavouring to stop.*

*Grumpff.* Come, come, young man, this won't do.

*False Hans.* Young man! Do you know whom you're addressing, Grumpff?

*Grumpff.* Grumpff! He calls me Grumpff! Here come out of this!

[Collars him—*REAL HANS* pulls him off, and sends him spinning round the stage. *FALSE HANS* has had his hair cut, and looks much smarter and less stupid than he did—*REAL HANS* bursts into tears at seeing him, and falls sobbing at table.

*False Hans.* Ahem! Now for a bold stroke. Potz-tausend, but I'm tired of this peasant's life, and I can't stand another fortnight of it! His confounded master wollops me when I don't work, and when I do he gives me bread and sausage. So here goes for a good one. (*Aloud.*) Hans!

*Real Hans.* Eh? why you've been and cut my hair!

*False Hans.* I have.

*Real Hans.* And you've washed my face, too!

*False Hans.* I have. It's my wedding-day.

*Real Hans.* That's a very great liberty. And you're afraid of catching cold?

*False Hans.* No; I am afraid of nothing. [Weeps.]

*Real Hans.* Well, for a man who's afraid of nothing, you seem to cry a good deal.

*False Hans.* Attribute it to remorse.

*Real Hans.* I will.

*False Hans.* I am a great scoundrel!

*Real Hans.* You are!

*False Hans.* I have committed a fearful crime.

*Real Hans.* You have—a many!

*False Hans.* One in particular. Hans, I have done you an irreparable injury.

*Real Hans.* I'm quite aware of that; you're going to marry my sweetheart. (*Weeps.*) And you're a married man! and I can't prevent it!

*False Hans.* Yes, but this is a greater injury still—an injury that dates many many years back! Listen, and I will tell you all! There is no occasion to disguise our identities when we are alone with each other. I am Otto—you are Hans.

*Real Hans.* In one sense I am.

*False Hans.* But—(and this is very secret)—you are *not* Hans!

*Real Hans.* In one sense I am not.

*False Hans.* Bah! I mean that you never *were* Hans—I mean that you were changed at birth!

*Real Hans.* Eh? By whom?

*False Hans.* By me!

*Real Hans.* By you? You shouldn't have done that.

*False Hans.* I should not. That is the secret crime that is weighing me down—that is the misdeed that blights my present happiness. [*Weeps.*]

*Real Hans.* Will you take anything?

*False Hans.* Nothing. I have already a weight here which is heavier than I can bear, and I would not add to it. I will tell you all! Listen!

*Real Hans.* I am all ears.

*False Hans.* You are! Twenty-five years ago the infant son of Baron Rudolph von Schlachsenstein was put out to nurse, when two days old, in the family of Hans Gopp, a simple peasant.

*Real Hans.* My father!

*False Hans.* The simple peasant had a son of the same age——

*Real Hans.* Myself!

*False Hans.* The two children were fed by one common mother. And a commoner mother never stepped!

*Real Hans.* She *was* common.

*False Hans.* Potz-tausend! don't interrupt me. Fraulein Gopp took the deepest interest in the young aristocrat, and brutally neglected her own child. She provided the baron's

son with a beautiful cradle, and fed him all day long. Her own son occupied a clothes-basket, and lived on chop-bones and cold pie-crust. Envy rankled in the heart of that poor little boy. The young baron occupied *his* place at his mother's breast—the young baron slept in his cradle—the young baron had *his* soothing syrup at night, and was dodged up with *his* powder puff in the morning. The peasant babe slept in a clothes-basket, and had to take his chance of the pump for a morning's wash. The peasant's babe, as he saw lavished on the young baron all the attentions that should have been his own, gnashed his toothless gums with envy, and swore to be avenged. One night—the babes were three weeks old, and were wonderfully alike—the peasant's babe crept from his clothes-basket, quietly removed the sleeping baron from his sumptuous cradle, placed the baron's son in the clothes-basket, and creeping into the baron's cradle, covered himself up and went to sleep. The cheat was never discovered! The peasant's son was brought up as the young baron—the young baron as the peasant's son. I was the peasant's son, Hans Gopp; you—*you* were the babe of the Baron von Schlachenstein!

*Real Hans.* This is very complicated. Then I, before I occupied your body, was really the Baron whom you represented yourself to be?

*False Hans.* You were! And I, who all my life passed for the Baron Otto von Schlachenstein, was, it point of fact, Hans Gopp, the peasant! Oh, remorse, remorse! But it is not too late to atone for the injury I have done you!

*Real Hans.* But I think you must be mistaken, for you are twenty years older than I am.

*False Hans.* I am *now*—but when I was three weeks old, of course I was the same age as you were when you were three weeks old.

*Real Hans* (puzzled). Of course, I see.

*False Hans.* You see I am naturally quicker than you are—besides, I'm ashamed to say I've lived a very fast life.

*Real Hans.* True; I forgot that. Then I really am a baron?

*False Hans.* You really are!

*Real Hans.* And you really are a peasant?

*False Hans.* I really am!

*Real Hans.* All right then—then that's settled.

*False Hans.* But ———

*Real Hans.* You can go.

*False Hans.* Potz-tausend! Don't be in a hurry. We mustn't neglect formalities. Here is a statement of the fact that you

are Baron von Schlachenstein, and I am Hans Gopp. We will both execute it—here, sign.

*Real Hans.* There you are. (*Signs.*) Hans Gopp.

*False Hans.* And there you are. (*Signs.*) Otto von Schlachenstein.

*Real Hans.* Good morning. .

*False Hans.* Eh?

*Real Hans.* You can go —

*False Hans.* Oh, no; I've not done with you yet. By our agreement with the Gentlemen in Black, Hans Gopp has to occupy the Baron's castle till the month is up, and the Baron has to occupy Hans's hut, until the month is up. But you are the Baron under this deed. So if you please you will be good enough to get out of this castle without further delay.

*Real Hans.* But now, by your own showing I am the Baron's soul in the Baron's body —

*False Hans.* No, you are the rightful Baron's soul in Hans Gopp's body. I am Hans Gopp's soul in the Baron's body. Potz-tausend, you are very dull!

*Real Hans.* Well, let me see—this is so confusing—

*False Hans.* Look here, I'll make it plain—here is Hans Gopp's body—here is Hans Gopp's soul—here is the Baron's body—here is the Baron's soul. Well, Hans' body goes into the Baron's soul—the Baron's soul into Hans' body. (*Very rapidly*). But Hans' body turns out to be the Baron's body, and the Baron's soul turns out to be Hans' soul; so, as the Baron's soul has to go into Hans' body and Hans' soul into the Baron's body, and as the Baron turns out to be Hans and Hans turns out to be the Baron, remembering that the Baron and Hans on the one side must be kept distinct from the Baron's soul and Hans' soul on the other, it follows that you are Hans' soul in the Baron's body—I am the Baron's soul in Hans' body; the Baron is Hans—Hans is the Baron—you are me—I am you—yours is mine—mine is yours—and out of this you go as soon as you conveniently can. I hope that's clear.

*Real Hans* (*puzzled*). Perfectly.

*False Hans.* It's as clear as day.

*Real Hans.* It's as clear as some days—in November.

*False Hans.* Very good; then for another month—that is to say, till the thirteenth of September—you are the Baron's soul in Hans' body.

*Enter GENTLEMAN IN BLACK, L. U. E.*

*Real Hans.* My dear sir, your head's clearer than mine—if you can tell me, certainly and once for all, who I am and whose

body I am occupying you'll remove a great weight of doubt from my mind. As long as I'm occupying this beast of a body——

*False Hans (angrily).* It's a very nice body.

*Real Hans.* It ain't!

*False Hans.* It is! „ [Threatening him with dagger.

*Real Hans (frightened).* Well, now I look at it again it is a nice body—well as long as I'm occupying this very agreeable body, it doesn't much matter to me whether I'm Hans or the Baron, so that it's clearly understood which of the two I really am. (to GENTLEMAN.) Here, perhaps you can tell me.

*Gentle.* Oh, it has nothing to do with me—settle it among yourselves—only whatever you decide upon you must stick to.

*False Hans.* This man is a pretender.

*Real Hans.* There's no doubt that I am a pretender, but whom I'm pretending to be, is entirely beyond my comprehension. I've been chopped and changed about so often in the course of the last week that I've lost the thread of the story, and I'll be damned if I know who I am!

*Gentle.* By this paper you admit that you are the Baron's soul occupying Hans Gopp's body—he admits that he is Hans Gopp's soul in the Baron's body.

*False Hans.* Exactly.

*Real Hans.* Very good; then that's understood—that's settled. I'm a peasant till the thirteenth September, then I shall be a Baron.

*False Hans (to GENTLEMAN).* Before the fortnight is up, I shall destroy the paper, and prove by the fact that I am twenty years older than he is, its utterly impossible we could have been changed at birth—I shall return to my rank, and he will be punished as an impostor. Good joke, isn't it?

*Gentle.* Excellent.

*Enter BERTHA and GRUMPPF, running, L. U. E.*

#### QUINTETTE.

<i>Bertha.</i>	Baron, here is news alarming!
<i>Grumpff.</i>	Comes your wife, so fair and charming!
<i>Bertha.</i>	Mandate from the empress bearing!
<i>Grumpff.</i>	Peremptorily declaring——
<i>Bertha.</i>	Since in marriage you have sought her——
	You must take her and support her!
<i>Baron.</i>	I'm perpetually harried!
	If the baroness has married,
	Otto, Lord of Schlachsenstein.
	That is no affair of mine!

*Hans.* But you seem to be forgetting—  
Or the secret out you're letting,  
You're the Lord of Schlachenstein!  
What is this the lady plans?  
Claim the baron, yes, and Hans!  
This indeed appears to be  
Quite a case of bigamy!

*Enter the Baroness, L. U. E.*

*Baroness.* Otto! I have triumphed, and I am yours!

*Real Hans.* Yes, but stop a minute, I'm not what I was!  
I'm the baron now!

*Baroness.* Exactly—I always said you were! Take me to your arms—it is the will of our illustrious Emperor.

*Real Hans.* I can't! go away! You don't understand. Now what am I to do here?

*Gentle.* You've admitted that you are the Baron Otto von Schlachenstein—this is the Baroness—here is the Emperor's decree—you can't help yourself! She's yours.

*Real Hans.* Very good. I occupy the left wing of the chateau; prepare the right wing for the baroness—and let all communication between the two wings be carefully walled up!

*Baroness.* Baron!

*Enter TINTELSTEIN and all the VILLAGERS, L. U. E.*

*Tintel.* My lord, it is my duty to read to you an edict given under the hand of the emperor—an edict of the most vital importance. Ahem! (*Reads.*) "Most illustrious and ever to be honoured madam!" No, that's not it—oh, here it is. "Proclamation! Whereas certain irregularities have crept into the calendar in the course of the last 1584 years, and whereas these irregularities (although in themselves unimportant), constitute in the aggregate a considerable space of time, be it enacted, and it is hereby enacted, that from this date forward, thirteen days be omitted from the calendar, whereby this third day of September under the Old Style becomes the thirteenth day of September under the New Style! Given under our hand this thirteenth day of September, 1584. God save the Emperor!"

[*The GENTLEMAN IN BLACK burns flash paper, and makes passes.*]

*Gentle.* Otto's body, grim and droll,  
Shrine your own unholy soul!  
Otto's soul, of moral shoddy,  
Get out of young Han's body!

[*HANS and OTTO resume their original manner.*]



*Baron.* Potz-tausend himmel Sackerment noch emmal! This won't do! The month isn't up yet!

*Hans.* He, he, he! I say, Otto, ain't you glad to get back again?

*Baron.* Potz-tausend! he calls me Otto! I am the Baron Otto von Schlachenstein. Remember that when you presume to address me!

*Hans.* Oh, no—by your own showing, and under this deed, I am the Baron. You know you changed me when we were three weeks old! You gnashed your toothless gums with envy, and swore to be avenged; and then, overwhelmed with remorse, you confessed all, and restored me to my estate and dignity.

[*Chuckles.*

*Baron.* But we were to change for a month, and only a fortnight has elapsed.

*Gentle.* Not for a month—it was from the thirteenth August to the thirteenth of September, 1584.

*Baron.* Well, that is a month, isn't it?

*Gentle.* Not in this case. Thirteen days have been omitted from the calendar, and your month is only a fortnight. I'm sorry for you, baron, but Hans takes your title and estate—you take his farm.

*Baron.* Potz-tausend himmel Sackerment noch emmal! I've been done! Why I haven't anything in the world!

*Baroness.* Nothing, Baron? Do you call me nothing? Do you call this interesting family, nothing?

*Baron.* Get out—I don't want you!

*Tintel.* Oh, but this won't do, you know! Here is the decree given under the sign manual of the Emperor; there's no getting over that! She's your wife, and you must support her.

*Baron.* Potz-tausend! but this is hard! Baroness, come to my arms! (*To the others.*) The communication need not be walled up.

*Bertha (to HANS).* Why, Hans, how you've changed again! Why, you're just the same as you used to be.

*Hans.* Bertha, I'm a baron, now, and you shall be a baroness. I was changed at birth by that big, bad man, but he won't change me at birth any more, if I know it!

*Bertha.* But what does it all mean?

*Hans.* Why it means that I'm mad with happiness at the narrow escape you've had of being married to that unmitigated villain.

*Bertha.* Married to *him*, Hans? Why such an idea never entered my head!

*Hans.* Oh, Bertha, how can you stand there, and tell such—

(*recollecting*)— No, no—of course not—it was to me you were going to be married, wasn't it?

*Bertha.* Of course!

*Hans.* And to me you shall be married. Friends, I invite you all—except *you*—(to REAL HANS)—to my wedding, and you may give us three cheers, if you like, in honour of the approaching nuptials.

FINALE.

We will set the bells a-ringing,  
Flowers, too, we will be bringing,  
Marriage songs so gaily singing,  
Keep it as a holiday!



# BRANTINGHAME HALL.

*First performed at the St. James's Theatre, London, under the management of Mr. Rutland Barrington, on Tuesday, 27th November, 1888.*

## DRAMATIS .PERSONÆ.

LORD SAXMUNDHAM, <i>of Brantingham</i>	
<i>Hall ... ..</i>	MR. NUTCOMBE GOULD.
HON. ARTHUR REDMAYNE,	
<i>travelling in Australia</i> {	MR. W. HERBERT.
<i>his Sons</i>	
HON. ALARIO REDMAYNE,	MR. DUNCAN FLEET.
<i>at Eton</i>	
MR. THURSBY, <i>a Country Gentleman</i>	MR. RUTLAND BARRINGTON.
RALPH CRAMPTON, <i>travelling with</i>	
<i>Arthur Redmayne ... ..</i>	MR. LEWIS WALLER.
REV. NOEL ROSS, <i>a Bush Missionary</i>	MR. NORMAN FORBES.
MR. PARFIT, <i>a London Solicitor</i> ...	MR. GILBERT TRENT
MR. PAULBY, <i>a Sydney Solicitor</i> ...	MR. NEWALL.
DICK SOMERS	MR. C. DODSWORTH.
SMITHERS	MR. DIXON.
CRUMP {	MR. MONTAGU.
<i>Australian Stockmen</i>	
BLUEBY	MR. F. LACY.
BAKER	MR. NICOL PENTLAND.
PARKER, <i>Mr. Thursby's Butler</i>	MR. WARDEN.
LADY SAXMUNDHAM ... ..	MRS. GASTON MURRAY.
RUTH, <i>Wife of Arthur Redmayne</i>	MISS JULIA NEILSON.
MABEL, <i>Thursby's Daughter</i> ...	MISS ROSE NORREYS.

### ACT I.

#### BRUNT'S STATION, NEW SOUTH WALES.

*Eighteen months are supposed to elapse between Acts I. and II.*

### ACTS II. AND III.

#### BRANTINGHAME HALL.

*A fortnight is supposed to elapse between Acts II. and III.*

### ACT IV.

#### MORNING ROOM AT MR. THURSBY'S.

*An interval of two hours between Acts III. and IV.*

# BRANTINGHAME HALL.

## ACT I.

SCENE.—*Brunt's Station, N.S.W. House and verandah, L. Palisade, R., with gate up stage. Basket chairs, R.C. and L.C., and under verandah.*

*Group of Australian stockmen and cowboys discovered. The following song heard before the curtain rises. As the Curtain rises the song finishes.*

SONG.—CRUMP, and others.

Your Saturday night comes once a week,  
And once a month your pay day ;  
And once a year your birthday's here  
(And I was born on a May-day).  
But honeymoons 'twixt women and men,  
They mostly happen but now and then ;  
So better sing, Tol the rol,  
And likewise, Tooral lay.  
Some years, mayhap, must needs go by  
Ere you are likely to enjoy  
Another wedding-day !  
Another wedding-day !

*Crump.* Whew ! Singin's warm work !

*Smithers.* Gar' long. 'Taint work—it's play. Call it work, and who'd do it ? Not Bill Crump, I know !

*Blueby.* That's true. But here's Mr. Redmayne comin'. Who'll speak to him ?

*Baker (up stage, coming down R.C.).* I'll speak him. Clear a space, mates ; gie us elber room.

*Smit.* No, no. We don't want no Jackaroo to speak for us. Dick Somers 'll speak ; he's got larnin'. [*Pushes BAKER down R.*

*Blue.* Aye, and manners, too.

*All.* Aye, Dick Somers !

*Crump.* Dick Somers it is. Tail off, Johnny Baker—you're no good.

Somers (L. of CRUMP). All right, mates, here goes !

[BAKER *sulkily*.

*Enter* ARTHUR REDMAYNE and REV. NOEL ROSS *from house*.

Redmayne (*from verandah*). Good day, my men. I hear you wish to speak to me.

Som. Beggin' your pardon, sir, but I'm the mouth of these hands, as the sayin' is.

Baker (*down R.*). Hands ain't got mouths.

Crump. Shut up, Johnny. Carry on, Dick Somers.

Som. (*bothered*). I dunno' where I was.

Baker. You was a sayin' you was a mouth. Oh you *was*.

Som. Of all these here cowboys. To be sure. Leastwise they've arst me to convey to you their sentiments on the recent aspicious occasion of your marriage with Miss Ruth. That's right, mates, ain't it ?

Blue. Aye, that's right; carry on.

Som. Well, I'm a doin' my best.

Baker. Aye, aye, it's *your* best, I dessay.

Som. (*aside, with an effort*). It's 'ard to 'old oneself in, but manners prewail. (*Aloud.*) Three months since you come here, unbeknown to us, and in that time you've won the 'and-somest and the best, and the truest-'arted gal in the colony. Well, Sir, we don't thank you for that—we'll wait and see how you treat her, fust. That's right, ain't it mates ?

Blue. Ah, right enough, God bless her !

Som. We've know'd her longer than what you have. Most of us 'as seed her grow up from a babby to a gal, and from a gal to a young woman, and she's allus had a kind word and a kind look for all of us. We're a roughish lot, but there ain't one of us as she ain't softed. She softed *me*.

Baker. Somebody has. You're soft enough, anyhow !

Som. (*rushing angrily at BAKER. SMITHERS and BLUEBY catch hold of SOMERS's coat-tail, and hold him back*). Look 'ere, Johnny Baker. I'm a hot'un; I can't help it. I'm a 'olding of myself back by main force, but by thunder, next time you put your spade in, it's a fair fight, so tail off ! (*To REDMAYNE.*) Beggin' your pardon, sir, for displayin' a little 'eat, but I ain't a Parliament man, and consekently, ain't been brought up on interruptions. Hero's wishin' you both 'ealth and 'appiness, sir. And that's all !

Red. (*on steps of verandah*). My good friends, I'm much touched by your kind words. That I've won a treasure, I know, and I'll keep her as I'd keep a treasure. I won't say what I'll do, for nothing is easier than to do that now, and go

from it afterwards. Time will show. Three months ago my friend, Mr. Ralph Crampton, brought me here to Brunt's Station, a poor thread-paper of a man, deadly sick of a raging fever. Stephen Brunt knew nothing about me, except that I was a sick man, but that was enough for him, and he received me with generous hospitality; and, as my friend was obliged to leave me to go to Sydney, Stephen Brunt's daughter tended me with angel hands and angel heart. So I fell in love with her, and we were married at Rathbone, three weeks since. We stopped there till three days ago, when we started on our ride home. And as there's a good dinner spread for you under yonder gum tree, the first that gets there will get the most of it.

*Somers.* Thankee, sir. (*Stockmen going off through gate.*) Hold hard, mates! Manners, mates, manners! Three cheers for Mr. Redmayne. He ain't arned them yet, but he will.

*All.* Hurray! hurray! hurray!

[*Exeunt crowd through gate.*]

*Ross* (*coming down and sitting*). By the way, Redmayne, have you written to tell Lord Saxmundham that you have married Ruth Brunt?

*Red.* (*standing*). Well, no—not yet.

*Ross.* I think you ought to let your father know.

*Red.* I ought, no doubt, Noel Ross. The question is, when and how? [*Crosses to Ross.*]

*Ross.* The answer is, at once, and in the plainest terms.

*Red.* Ah, you don't know my father. He's as poor as Job, and as proud as Lucifer; and if I wrote to tell him that I, his eldest living son, and heir to the title, had married the daughter of an ex-convict, I don't believe he'd live to read any further. I might cover a ream of paper with the story of how she saved my life, and how I fell in love with her, bit by bit, until she was more to me than the life she saved. It wouldn't do. No, I must take Ruth to England with me as soon as her father is well again, and let her gentle voice tell its own convincing tale.

[*Crosses to R.C.*]

*Ross.* Well, as you please. I've said my say, and I've done. By the way, I suppose you know that your friend Crampton is expected back from Sydney to-day? [*Rising.*]

*Red.* Yes, I'm sorry to say I do.

*Ross.* Sorry! I thought you were close friends?

*Red.* We were—but I've just heard that Ralph Crampton has been proved to be a thorough scamp. It seems that he has an unacknowledged wife somewhere, whom he ill-treated, and who left him. It's rather awkward, for he has advanced £18,000 to



my poor father on the security of Brantinghame Hall, and it won't do to quarrel with him just now. [Seated R.C.]

*Ross.* Does he know of your marriage?

*Red.* No, he doesn't.

*Ross.* And is Ruth satisfied with this state of things?

*Red.* Poor child, she knows nothing of the world outside Brunt's Claim. It is enough for her that we love each other dearly, and that you have married us. I have told her that I will take her home to my father, and she is content. Ah! you old bachelors don't know how far the devotion of a loving woman will carry her.

*Ross.* Don't I? My good friend, I was once the incumbent of a fashionable London parish.

*Red.* The deuce you were! Then this bush-life must be a change to you?

*Ross.* It is; and that's why I adopted it. Between ourselves, my dear fellow, I had to leave London in a hurry.

*Red.* How was that? If it isn't a fair question, don't answer it.

*Ross.* Why the fact is—you'd never guess it—but, between ourselves, I'm desperately impressionable, and with half the women of my parish setting their caps at me, I wasn't safe. They never left me. Presents showered down upon me. It literally rained carriage-rugs, altar-cloths, birthday books, paper-knives, letter-weights, pocket-diaries, knitted waistcoats, and presentation inkstands. I was the repository of all their confidences. I had to devote two hours every day to deciding cases of female conscience of the most complicated and delicate description. My photographs bought up as fast as they could be printed! Half-a-dozen ladies of exalted rank were carried out in convulsions whenever I preached! The situation became serious: it was more than a highly susceptible clergyman ought to be called upon to bear. To make a long story short, there was nothing for it but flight. So, one night—one dark November night—I fled! I sailed at once for Sydney, and here I am, a hard-working bush missionary, with thirty or forty miles to ride every day—a fine field of usefulness before me, and—except your wife, whom I am much obliged to you for having married—nothing in the shape of a handsome woman within a week's march. I weathered 'em, sir; I weathered 'em. It was a hard fight, but, by Jove! I won it, sir. By Jove! I won it.

[Takes stage L.]

*Enter RUTH, from house.*

*Ruth.* Who speaks of fighting on such a day as this? Noel Ross! a clergyman! Oh, Noel Ross! [*Goes.*]

*Ross.* It was a bloodless fight, my dear Ruth, but a hard one, nevertheless. (*REDMAYNE comes down.*) I have been told that I am no one's enemy but my own. But a man who is his own enemy, and in that capacity conquers himself, has achieved a victory of which he may be permitted to crow a little. (*Goes to steps of verandah.*) By the way, we were talking about you a minute ago. Redmayne, my boy, tell her what we were saying. [*Exit ROSS into house.*]

*Red.* Noel Ross was saying that I ought to tell my father of our marriage, my darling.

*Ruth.* Yes. It seems to me that that is right. Why should you not do so?

*Red.* I wanted my father to see you first.

*Ruth.* He may not like me.

[*Sitting.*]

*Red.* Ha! ha!

*Ruth.* He is a very proud man, is he not?

*Red.* Yes; and he will be prouder than ever when he sees the beautiful daughter I have given him.

*Ruth.* I do not quite understand. I am stupid, I think, because to tell him seems to me so easy, and so simple, and so plain a thing to do. He is a lord, you say?

*Red.* Yes, he is a lord.

*Ruth.* Is he very wise and good?

*Red.* Very. Good and wise in all he does.

*Ruth.* And is that why he was made a lord?

*Red.* No. It is not for their wisdom or their virtues that lords are made. Our family has been noble for three centuries.

*Ruth.* Then I suppose, *you* will be lord some day.

*Red.* Yes, if I survive my father. And then you will be Lady Saxmundham.

*Ruth.* I! That is strange. It does not seem in reason.

[*Rises.*]

*Red.* Why not, Ruth?

*Ruth.* I have done nothing to deserve it. I am an untaught farmer's girl—very foolish, I suppose, and quite ignorant of all that a lady should know. Lady Saxmundham! No, it certainly does not seem right.

*Red.* (*seated. RUTH at his feet.*) My dearest child, there are many good and beautiful women in the British Peerage, and there are, I am sorry to say, some who are neither good nor beautiful. They are as other women are—neither better nor

worse. But be sure of this, my darling—that there is none among them who wears her coronet more gracefully than the good and pure and gentle girl will do whom I have made my wife. Will you believe this?

*Ruth.* It seems strange that it should be so, but I believe everything you say to me. Even now I cannot understand why you do not write to your father to say that you have married me.

*Red.* You believe me when I tell you that it is better that I should wait until he sees you.

*Ruth (looking up at him).* Yes, I believe that. You say so, and therefore I believe it. I love you, and therefore I am content to believe. I am untaught, and I do not know many things. But be sure that I believe. [*REDMAYNE kisses her.*]

*Red.* And now, Ruth (*they rise*), I have some news for you. My friend, Ralph Crampton, who had to go to Sydney ten days after I was brought to your father's run, wrote a few days since to say that he was soon to return. I did not get the letter until I arrived to-day, and his horses are already in sight on the Wabba Road.

*Ruth.* Mr. Crampton!

*Red.* Yes. You don't seem pleased.

*Ruth.* No, I am not pleased. Is he very dear to you?

*Red.* Well, no, he is not very dear. But why do you ask?

*Ruth.* When you first came to us—when your fever was at its very worst—I saw him often.

*Red.* Yes.

*Ruth.* During that time his bearing towards me made me think—that he hoped I should some day be to him what I am to you.

*Red.* Why, what do you mean, Ruth?

*Ruth.* He seemed strangely interested in me; and, indeed, before he quitted us he gave me cause to think that it distressed him solely that he should have to go. At first I thought it was because he wished to be with you; but from what he said, I do not think it was that.

*Red.* Do you mean to tell me that Ralph Crampton had the audacity to make love to you?

*Ruth.* He said little, but—I am quite frank with you, as I always will be—and I think he wished me to believe that he loved me.

*Red.* Why the man is married!

*Ruth.* Married!

*Red.* Yes, secretly married, and parted from his wife! And

this fellow dared to cast his eyes upon you? Why he is a scoundrel indeed.

*Ruth.* It may be that I have misjudged him. Still I am not glad that he is coming back. There is that in him which makes me fear him.

*Red. (taking her hand).* Have no fear, Ruth, while I am here. But say nothing to him about his marriage. I only heard of it by a side wind, and I suppose he would resent any allusion to it. Here he is—whom has he brought with him?

[*Goes L. RUTH goes R.*]

*Enter RALPH CRAMPTON and MR. PAULBY, through gate.*

*Ralph.* Redmayne, my dear fellow, I'm overjoyed to see you well and hearty again. Why you *have* picked up, indeed! And it is to this kind and good nurse that we owe it that you are still with us. (*To RUTH.*) Thank you, thank you most heartily, my dear young lady (*takes her hand*). (*To REDMAYNE.*) Why you're as bright as a pippin! By the way, allow me to introduce my fellow traveller, Mr. Paulby. I know his name, and that he has business with you; but he's a devilish close fellow, and he won't tell me more than that.

[*RUTH is up the stage at gate. RALPH goes to her.*]

*Paulby.* Mr. Redmayne, I am a Sydney solicitor, and I have business of the very deepest importance with you. Will you kindly grant me ten minutes interview.

*Red.* Business with me? You bring me no bad news about my father or mother?

*Paul.* No, my business has no connection with them.

*Red.* Then pray be so good as to step inside. Mr. Crampton will excuse me, I know.

[*Exeunt REDMAYNE and PAULBY into house.*]

*Ralph (up stage).* Mr. Crampton will do so, with all his heart. (*RUTH crosses as if to enter house. RALPH intercepts her*). Miss Ruth, I have taken it for granted, perhaps unreasonably, that I may once more claim your hospitality.

*Ruth.* It is not my hospitality that you claim but my father's.

*Ralph.* I would not accept his hospitality, unless I knew that it was endorsed by yourself.

*Ruth.* It is my duty to welcome my father's guests.

*Ralph.* Well, I must make the most of your answer.

*Ruth.* Why must you make the most of it? I speak in plain and simple words.

*Ralph.* Perhaps I expected more than a statement of duty.

If so, I was unreasonable. I finished my work in Sydney four days since, and, as you see, I have lost no time in returning here.

*Ruth.* To see your friend, and to learn from his own lips that he is well again. That is natural. [Crosses to L.

*Ralph.* He owes his life to you.

[Putting his riding crop down.

*Ruth.* Nay, I did but tend him. Heaven was good to him, and he lived. [Seated.

*Ralph.* He's a lucky fellow. It is worth while travelling to death's door, to be brought back by you. I would gladly—oh, how gladly!—have done so myself. [Crossing to L.

*Ruth.* I do not see why you should wish to do that. You have been well, while he has been sick. You should be thankful.

*Ralph.* I would gladly be what I should be. I would gladly learn what I should be, from you.

*Ruth.* From me!

*Ralph.* Yes. I've passed a wild life enough, yet no worse a life than that of ten men out of a dozen—a heedless, reckless life, living for the day, and for the day only. I have thought lightly of women, and treated them lightly, and many of the women I have met deserved nothing better. But when fate threw me into your path, I saw in you, not what woman is, but what woman might be—(*RUTH rises alarmed*)—something to idolize, something to worship with a sacred madness, something that purifies by the emanation of her own purity, the incarnation of every psalm that has found favour in the Creator's eyes!

*Ruth.* Oh stop—stop, I pray you! [Crosses to R.

*Ralph.* During the fortnight that I was with you, I had but one thought, and that was of you. I loved you, from the moment our eyes met, with a love that has become a religion, I have knelt to you, I have prayed to you, night and morning. Night and morning! Every hour of the day and night, every minute of every hour! Oh, my God, every atom of time has been passed with you! Well, I am here at last in your presence, and I hang on your answer, as a doomed man hangs on the hope of pity and of pardon.

*Ruth.* Mr. Crampton! You do not know what you are saying! (*Sees REDMAYNE who enters from behind house, and rushes to him.*) Oh Arthur! Arthur! Tell him—tell him!

[REDMAYNE seizes RALPH who has followed RUTH.  
RUTH remains in great agitation.

ROSS and PAULBY enter from behind house, and watch the scene from gate.

*Red.* You mean and miserable hound! You coarse and cowardly scoundrel!

*Ralph.* What do you mean? • Take your damned hands off! Are you all mad?

*Red.* You accursed villain! you shall have good cause to repent this—this insult—this outrage!

*Ralph.* Insult! Outrage! I love this girl honourably, and I have told her so. What is there in this to justify your brutal insolence? It is the insolence of a coward who knows his strength. It is that, and no more and no less than that!

*Red.* You dare to characterise the insult you have offered to this lady as honourable love? Why, your love is a blasphemy; and the lady to whom you have offered it is my wife.

*Ralph.* Your wife!

*Red.* Yes. Where is yours?

*Ralph.* Mine? I don't understand you.

*Red.* You lie. I know your secret. You are married to one Eva Templeman. Heaven pity and help her! (*To RUTH.*) My darling, don't tremble; you are safe. I am with you.

*Ralph (with suppressed fury).* You have done well to make an enemy of me. You have done well and wisely. You fool; was there no way to let me know this, but the way you have chosen? Do you know the nature of the man on whom you have inflicted this deadly insult? Do you know how much devil goes to make a determined and life-long enemy? If not, you shall learn. It may be sooner; it may be later. It may be to-day; it may be to-morrow. But the reckoning will come—be sure of it—and it shall dog you to the grave!

[*Exit RALPH through gate, which PAULBY politely opens.*]

*Red.* There, the pest has gone, and the air is sweeter for it. I beg your pardon, Mr. Ross; but he's a villain, and I've told him so.

*Ross (up stage).* So you have. I think you made your meaning quite clear. Don't apologise, my dear fellow. I should be sorry if I had been a restraint on your movements.

*Ruth.* But his threat. Oh, my beloved; his threat!

*Red. (putting her over to c.).* Hush, my wife. You must not allow yourself to be frightened by such a turnip-headed ghost as that. If he rise, be sure I know how to lay him. But in the excitement of dealing with that scoundrel, I forgot to tell you the news that Mr. Paulby has brought me. It is

good news, Ruth though there's a death in it. My godfather, James Crawshay, died in England a few weeks ago, and has left me the bulk of his fortune. It is a big thing—nearly three hundred thousand, I understand—enough to make me a rich man, and rich enough to enrich my poor old father.

*Ruth.* Why that is a vast fortune, is it not?

*Ross (coming down.)* Pretty well, my dear. Nothing to an American oilman; but a large fortune, indeed, to a poor Englishman.

*Red.* But that's not all my news. I am one of the trustees under the will—the affairs of the estate are in the greatest confusion, and, in short, we must leave for England at once.

*Ruth.* At once? Oh no, no!

*Red.* At once,—without an hour's delay. Mr. Paulby secured a cabin for us on board the "Calypso" before he left, and we sail in three days. A pair of fast cobs are already in the trap, and all that is necessary for the voyage we can purchase in Sydney.

[*RUTH dazed, turns to PAULBY, enquiringly.*

*Paul. (coming down.)* I am sorry to say Mrs. Redmayne, that, having regard to the enormous interest at stake, and the confusion in which Sir James Crawshay's affairs were left, it is absolutely necessary that your husband should return to England forthwith.

*Ruth.* But my father! I cannot leave my father! He is very sick and like to die! Oh, Arthur, you will not take me from my father!

*Red.* I know it is hard to have to leave him in his critical condition; still, means can, no doubt be found whereby he could be nursed during your absence.

*Ruth (after a pause.)* No. I cannot leave my father to be tended by strangers. He is sick unto death, and I am everything that he has.

[*PAULBY goes to RUTH and attempts to console her.*

*Ross.* Redmayne, she's right. There is no knowing how long you may be detained in England, and her duty is with her father.

*Ruth.* Yes, my duty is with my father; that is plain. My duty is with my father.

*Red.* Then, my love—my darling love, be comforted. It is a bitter parting to both of us, but the interests at stake are enormous, and at any sacrifice I must go. As soon as your father can be left, you will follow me; Noel Ross and Mr. Paulby will see to that—and who knows but that in a few months we shall be in England together. (*Aside to ROSS.*) Ross

here is my will, made in Ruth's favour, and some other papers, which you will read and act upon. (*Grasping Ross's hand.*) Good-bye, old fellow. (*Music to the end of Act.*) And now, my beloved child (*turning to RUTH and putting her to L.C.*) farewell, and may heaven protect and guide you, my darling, until we meet again. (*Embraces her. RUTH is weeping bitterly through these lines. He makes as if to go—pauses—embraces her again.*) Mr. PAULBY, I am ready! [*Backs from her.*

Ruth. (*About to faint.*) Arthur! Arthur!

[REDMAYNE catches her in his arms as she falls fainting on the stage.

## ACT II.

*Interior of Brantinghame Hall. Large oak writing table R.; Settee R.C.; Small table L.C. a little higher up stage than the settee; Chair B. of Table; Large doorway C.; Doors R. and L., at first entrances; Fireplace and overmantel; Oak staircase leading to gallery over centre door; a "cabinet" photograph of Arthur Redmayne stands on table.*

LORD SAXMUNDHAM discovered, seated on settee. LADY SAXMUNDHAM at table. PARFIT standing R. of writing table, dealing with various legal documents.

(*Eighteen months have elapsed.*)

Lord Sax. Now Mr. Parfit, I am but an indifferent man of business, and my lady finds even greater difficulty than I do in grasping legal technicalities. Will you be so obliging as to recapitulate, in the simplest terms, the present state of affairs?

Par. My lord, matters stands thus: Eighteen months since, your lamented son, Mr. Arthur Redmayne, sailed from Sydney, Southampton, in the steamship "Calypso." No news of the ship came to hand until twelve months ago, when a bottle was washed on shore, near Point de Galle, containing a slip of paper, on which was written in the captain's hand, the words: "Steamship 'Calypso'—Lat., 8.15 N.; long., 89. 12 E. Ship sinking—no hope. God help us all." Your lordship, as heir-at-law to your son, is entitled to the estate devised to him by his godfather, the late Sir James Crawshay, and valued at £350,000.

Lord Sax. (*impatiently*). Yes, yes, we know all that; but the proceedings that have been taken to support my claim—



*Par.* Application has been made to the Judge of the Probate Division for letters of administration as to the personalty, supported by your affidavit—(*turning over the documents referred to*) to which is annexed a letter from the deceased, written on board the “Calypso”—proof that she is seventeen months overdue—proof that the document enclosed in the bottle is in the captain’s handwriting—proof of the absence of other tidings, save the date when she was last seen—proof that the underwriters have paid on the policies, as for a total loss. Also by an affidavit of the ship’s agent, upon the general facts of the case. The application comes on for hearing to-day. It is practically unopposed, and if the Court is pleased to accept this very strong presumptive evidence, there is no doubt but that your lordship will be placed in immediate possession of this most valuable estate—

[*Going.*

*Lady Sax.* Then at any moment we may expect to hear that judgment has been given?

*Par.* (*up stage*). At any moment. My partner, who is in Court, will at once wire the Court’s judgment to you and to your friend, Mr. Thursby, as one of the executors under the will.

[*Exit PARFIT.*

*Ld. Sax.* Janet, this state of suspense is terrible. With ample prosperity, and utter ruin staked on the chance of a judge’s caprice, it is difficult, indeed, to preserve an appearance of composure.

*Lady Sax.* (*rising*). My dear, you must not allow yourself to be agitated. Suppose the worst—suppose that the Court is not satisfied with the evidence of our dear son’s death—so conclusive, alas, to all but lawyers! We shall, at least, be no poorer than we have been for many years past.

*Ld. Sax.* True, but what a struggle it has been! Brantinghame mortgaged to the very tree-tops—rents reduced everywhere, and the reduced rents unpaid—creditors pressing on all hands, and Alaric just on the point of leaving Eton!

*Lady Sax.* Has not the last year’s interest on Mr. Crampton’s mortgage been paid?

*Ld. Sax.* No; and if the case is decided against us, heaven only knows how it is to be raised!

[*Rising.*

*Lady Sax.* But Mr. Crampton will surely not press you for payment?

*Ld. Sax.* I am not disposed to place myself under an obligation to Mr. Crampton. As you know, the divorce proceedings, though they resulted in his favour, exhibited him in a most discreditable light. I would make a large sacrifice, my dear

Janet, to be enabled to shake off the man's hold on Brantinghame Hall. [Exit LORD SAXMUNDHAM.]

*Lady Sax.* The situation is indeed terrible; and yet how light these troubles seem, compared with the bereavement that is to place us beyond the reach of trouble! Heaven knows I would face very beggary to have my poor boy with us again.

*Enter ALARIC from gallery.*

*Alar.* Mother, I want to talk to you on a very important matter.

*Lady Sax.* Indeed, Alaric? Then come down and tell me all about it. [ALARIC comes down.]

*Alar.* Why, mother, you've been crying. And I am so chock-full of happiness. I'm awfully sorry I'm so happy.

[Sits by her.]

*Lady Sax. (seated).* Come, my darling boy, tell me all about it.

*Alar.* A—you are awfully fond of me, are you not?

*Lady Sax.* Very fond, my dear boy. You are the only son that is left to me now.

*Alar.* And anything that concerns my happiness, naturally concerns yours too, doesn't it?

*Lady Sax.* Most assuredly.

*Alar.* Well, then (*rising and calling to MABEL, who appears in the gallery at the back of the stage*), come down Mabel, and don't be a goose. Come down you little muff, and get it over.

[*He runs up the stairs and brings MABEL down. She stands on his L.*]

*Lady Sax.* Oh, Mabel is concerned in this, is she?

*Alar.* Well, yes—indirectly. The fact is, Mabel and I want to be married.

*Lady Sax.* Married? That's rather sudden, is it not?

*Alar.* Oh, no—it's been going on for ever so many years—about ten, I think—hasn't it, Mabel?

*Mab.* Eleven, Alaric. I was six when you began to—to pay me attention.

*Alar.* And I was seven; yes, eleven years. Marriage is much too serious a thing to hurry over, you know. What I say is, that however attractive a man may think a girl to be, when he first sees her—and when I first saw Mabel I thought her the most attractive girl I had ever met—it is impossible to feel sure that she has those solid and sympathetic qualities, without which mere beauty is a delusion and a snare. So Mabel and I have been studying each other for eleven years, and—well, we think we were made for each other.

*Lady Sax.* But don't you think that, at your age, you are rather young to marry?

*Mab.* Oh, but we don't think of marrying yet, for a long time, Lady Saxmundham.

*Alar.* Oh no—not for some months. No fellow with my serious responsibilities ought to marry until—well, until he has left Eton. It wouldn't be good form, you know. Besides, a fellow would get so chaffed.

*Lady Sax.* I certainly think a young gentleman should not marry while he is at school.

*Alar.* Mother, dear—now you are laughing at us.

[*Crosses to R.*

*Lady Sax. (rising and standing between them).* No, my dear children, I love you both too tenderly to say or to do anything, intentionally, that would make you unhappy. I want you, Alaric, to be a good and true man; scrupulously honourable in all things, and, above all things, in chivalrous regard to all women. Be strong and earnest in this, and you will be strong and earnest in all good things; and so I do not laugh at any love that is true and honest and straightforward. But a long time must elapse before such a topic can be seriously entertained; and in the meantime, you must content yourself with remembering that your father and I love you both very dearly, and that if you have a good and honourable wish at heart, we are not likely to stand in the way of its fulfilment. Now that must satisfy you (*crossing to R. C.*)—so let me hear no more about it, you foolish children, for a long—a very long time to come.

[*Exit LADY SAXMUNDHAM.*

*Alar. (on sofa).* Now, isn't that a trump of a mother? And mind, I didn't chouse her—her being my mother is a pure bit of luck.

*Mab (seated on stool at his L.).* I am sure of that, dear. But what do you think Lord Saxmundham will say?

*Alar.* Oh, I've no fear on that score. It is true that my father's political principles are entirely opposed to my own; but then, you know, I've given a great deal more attention to politics than he has.

*Mab.* I'm sure you have, dear.

*Alar.* Yes. You know, one's father may be a very fine fellow, even though his political views are still in their infancy. Your own father, Mr. Thursby, is one of the finest gentlemen in England, yet he has the misfortune to hold political opinions that are still more ridiculously at variance with my own.

*Mab.* Poor papa! I'm afraid he's a terrible—what is the word?

*Alar.* Tory, Mabel.

*Mab.* A terrible Tory ! And he ought to be, and would be, if he knew as much about it as you and I do—a—a Radical, isn't it ?

*Alar.* A Radical. You know, I've explained to you what a Radical is, haven't I ?

*Mab.* Oh, yes. (*Rises.*) A Radical is one who—he's a person who holds that—he's one who thinks that he's everybody—well, you're a Radical, you know.

*Alar.* Yes, but that is not sufficiently definite. Now listen to me. A Radical is one who—who considers that—all men—and all women—are, in a way—that is to say, in a certain qualified sense—more or less—and generally more *than* less—a—a—well, I'm a Radical, you know.

*Mab.* (*seated on stool*). How clever you are, dear, and what a statesman you will make, some day !

*Alar.* Yes. You know, radically speaking, everyone's equal.

*Mab.* Equal to what, dear ?

*Alar.* Oh, equal to what's wanted of him. Tories are *not* equal to what's wanted of them. There you have the distinction in a nutshell. And all property ought to belong to everybody or nearly everybody—equally. And there oughtn't to be any Bishops, or rich men—or scarcely any—or anybody (or, at all events, very few) better or wiser than anybody else.

*Mab.* I see. But why are you so much better and wiser than anybody else ? That's what I can't understand.

*Alar.* It's the fault of the detestable system under which we groan, my dear Mabel. (*Rises and crosses to L.*) You see, the system required that I should go to Eton. That's how I came to be so much more intelligent than I have any right to be.

*Mab.* What a shame ! But, when everybody is a Radical, will they all be as good and wise as you, or will you be as foolish and bad as they—or, if not, how will you manage it ?

*Alar.* Well, you see, I expect we shall meet half-way.

*Mab.* That'll be a terrible come down for you.

*Alar.* Yes. I'm not quite sure how that will be. (*Crossing to R. c.*) I'm going to think that out. It's a large question.

*Mab.* Then, of course, there will be no Peers ?

*Alar.* (*surprised at the question*). Oh, yes, there'll be Peers !

*Mab.* You are quite sure of that ?

*Alar.* Oh, quite. But they will be Radical Peers, you know, so it will be all right.

*Mab.* I see. And they won't have any more money than anybody else ?

*Alar.* Well, they must have a good deal of money, or they

couldn't do the good that's expected of them. Oh, yes, a Peer ought to have a lot of money.

*Mab.* But no social influence?

*Alar.* Oh, yes, he'll have a lot of social influence—but only for good. He'll set an example, you know—that's what *he'll* do. Come, let's have a "knock-up." (*Taking up tennis bat from settee.*) I'm afraid you don't quite understand Radical principles, Mabel.

*Mab.* I don't think I do, dear, but a few more lessons from you will make it as clear as day. Oh, Alaric!

*Alar.* What?

*Mab.* What a statesman you will make some day!

[*Exeunt MABEL and ALARIC.*]

*Enter Servant, showing in MR. THURSBY.*

*Thurs.* Tell his Lordship I must see him at once. Oh, here he is.

*Enter LORD SAXMUNDHAM. Exit Servant.*

*Ld. Sax. (anxiously).* Thursby! Any news?

*Thurs.* News! I should think so! My dear Saxmundham, I bring you the very best of all good news, and I congratulate you with all my heart!

*Ld. Sax.* Then the decision has been given?

*Thurs.* To be sure it has; and a very first-class decision it is. The Judge of the Probate Division deserves a peerage, and he shall have it, if he'll wait till I'm Prime Minister. Ha! ha!

*Ld. Sax. (anxiously).* There's no possibility of doubt, Thursby?

*Thurs.* Doubt? Not a bit of it. (*LORD SAXMUNDHAM sits on sofa.*) Look at that. (*Hands telegram to LORD SAXMUNDHAM.*) Why, it's done, finished, settled, wiped off the slate. It's done, my boy; done!

*Ld. Sax.* And can no one dispute it?

*Thurs.* No. Stop! Yes; I can! As trustee under the will. And if you don't play leap-frog for very joy over every arm-chair in the house, I'll enter proceedings against you at once. Come; here's a little one to begin with (*indicating chair*). Over you go! Ha! ha! [*Sits astride on chair, which stood at table.*]

*Ld. Sax.* And am I to understand that I can touch the personality at once?

*Thurs.* To be sure you can! Stuff your pockets with the personality!—roll in the personality! swim in the personality! feed the pigs with the personality! Ha! ha! By George, I envy you. I'd willingly pass the next ten years in poverty to enjoy

the delightful sensation of having come into a large fortune without having done anything at all to earn it. But I had the misfortune to be born rich, and consequently never knew what it was to enjoy money. Melancholy case, mine. (*Rising and replacing chair.*) Ha! ha! (*Suddenly.*) I say, Saxmundham! See those two young people, there? [*Looking off.*]

*Ld. Sax. (rising).* Mabel and Alaric?

*Thurs.* Yes, Mabel and Alaric. They've got their arms round each others waists!

*Ld. Sax.* Bless my heart, so they have.

*Thurs.* Ha! Nice, prudent, careful, considerate young gentleman, Alaric! By George, sir, he's proposed to my girl! Proposed to her! Wants to marry her! And she says, "Yes, my buck, and as soon as you please!"

*Ld. Sax. (rather shocked).* Bless me, did Mabel say that?

*Thurs.* Something very like it. She barely out of the nursery, and he liable to be birched at Eton, any day! Birched, sir! Fancy a married man who can't sit down at his own fireside for the best of all possible reason, while his wife duns him for money to buy baby-linen for the doll! But there are no boys and girls nowadays. The race died out with the dodo!

[*Exit THURSDAY.*]

*Enter Servant with card.*

*Ser.* A gentleman is in the library who wishes to speak with your lordship.

*Ld. Sax. (reading card).* Ralph Crampton! Returned to England at last. I suppose he waited for his divorce, the scamp! (*To Servant.*) Show him in at once. It will be a relief to square accounts with him, and have done with him for ever.

*Enter RALPH CRAMPTON.*

*Ld. Sax.* Mr. Crampton, your visit is unexpected.

*Ralph.* Naturally. I have been travelling for three years, and I only returned to England two days since.

*Ld. Sax.* Mr. Crampton, if I am rightly informed, you were with my poor son shortly before he left Sydney. You have, of course, heard the terrible news.

*Ralph.* I have heard that the ship in which he sailed was lost with all hands. Lord Saxmundham, let us be quite frank with one another. Your son and I parted in hot anger. He passed a gross and cowardly insult on me, and his insult was based on a letter which he stated that he received from you.

*Ld. Sax.* It is true, sir, that I wrote to him to the effect that you had an acknowledged wife whom you had greatly maltreated.

*Ralph.* My lord, I am a man who does not readily forgive. Your son's infamous treatment of me, and the cause of that treatment have placed it out of the question that friendly relations can continue to exist between us.

*Ld. Sax.* I am disposed to agree with you sir. I have a pardonable faith in my dead son's actions, and if, as you say, he addressed you in terms of obloquy, it was no doubt for a sufficient cause. That obloquy, sir, whatever it was, I cordially endorse!

*Ralph.* As your lordship pleases. Under these circumstances you will probably prefer that our business relations should terminate at once.

*Ld. Sax. (seated on sofa).* You refer, of course, to the money you advanced me on the security of Brantinghame Hall. As you say, sir, I greatly prefer that all relations between us, of whatever kind, should terminate forthwith.

*Ralph.* You are entitled to three months' notice of foreclosure, but no more.

*Ld. Sax. (angrily).* I wish for no notice, sir,—I desire to have done with you at once. I desire that our account may be closed forthwith. The principal and arrears of interest shall be paid to you within a week.

*Ralph (much surprised).* Within a week! Am I to take that as definite?

*Ld. Sax.* You are to take that as definite. The money shall be placed to your account on Thursday next. Are you satisfied?

*Ralph.* Yes. That is, of course, sufficient. (*Aside.*) Where is the money to come from, I wonder! He's as poor as a rat!

*Lord Sax. (rising).* You will pardon me if I put an immediate end to this interview. My son is dead, sir, and you think yourself justified in coming to his sorrowing father with an attack upon his memory. It might have been done more delicately—you understand me, sir—more delicately.

RALPH is about to reply when MABEL enters.

*Mab.* I did not know that you were engaged.

*Ld. Sax. (up stage).* Don't go, Mabel, my dear: don't go!

[*Patting her head.*]

*Ralph (with an effort at self-control).* Good morning, my lord. [*Exit.*]

*Mab.* Has anything happened to distress you?

*Ld. Sax. (with an attempt to speak cheerfully).* No, my

dear, no. Mr. Crampton, who left as you entered, has wounded me a little. But it will pass—it will pass. Say nothing to Lady Saxmundham. I have some good news for her, my dear, and I wish her to hear nothing but good news to-day.

[Exit LORD SAXMUNDHAM.]

*Mab.* What has that man been saying to him, I wonder! It seems to me that everyone is destined to be miserable to-day except Alaric and me!

[Crosses to L. C.]

*Enter RUTH. She is dressed as a widow.*

*Ruth.* I ask your pardon. I wish to see Lord Saxmundham or Mr. Thursby. I called at Mr. Thursby's house, and I was told that he was here.

*Mab.* Lord Saxmundham has just left the room, and Mr. Thursby, my father, has gone home. I—I am sorry to see that you have some great grief.

*Ruth.* Forgive me. I have, indeed, a great sorrow, and it is fit that I should weep when I am here, for I am the widow of Lord Saxmundham's dead son.

*Mab.* The widow of Mr. Redmayne! I did not know that he was married.

*Ruth.* I was wed to him three short weeks before he left Australia. I ask you to pardon my tears. It is natural that I should be much moved, for I loved him with all the love that my heart could hold, and I am in his old home and he is dead.

[Sits on sofa.]

*Mab. (advancing to her.)* Poor lady! If there be words that can console such grief as yours, try and believe that I have spoken them. They are in my heart, but I do not know how to utter them. I have known so little of sorrow.

*Ruth.* May Heaven spare you such sorrow as mine!

*Mab.* Shall I tell Lord Saxmundham that you are here?

*Ruth.* Yes, for he was my darling's father. But my darling wrote to me before he left, commending me to Mr. Thursby, who would tell me what to do, if perchance he should never reach England.

*Mab.* My father will, I am sure, do all he can to serve one who was dear to his very dear friend. (*Going R. RUTH rises.*) May I—may I kiss you?

*Ruth.* I thank you. (*Kisses her. Exit MABEL.*) At last I stand in the house that was my darling's home—the home in which he was born, and in which he grew to noble manhood! It is strange to know that every corner—every nook in this old house, so strange to me, was known, so closely known to him,



my dearly loved ! (*Sees portrait of ARTHUR REDMAYNE on table, and kneels to it.*) Oh, my darling, dead and in heaven ! My darling, dead and in heaven !

*Enter LORD SAXMUNDHAM, RUTH recovers herself, and rises.*

*Ld. Sax.* Madam, I hear that you would speak with Mr. Thursby. May I ask whom I have the honour of addressing ?

*Ruth (much moved).* Are you Lord Saxmundham ?

*Ld. Sax.* I am.

*Ruth.* I have come from far away to see you. I am Ruth, the daughter of Stephen Brunt, of Brunt's Claim, near Sydney.

*Ld. Sax.* I recollect the name. Surely it was from a place so called that my poor dead son's last letter was dated ?

*Ruth.* Yes. The station then belonged to my father, but he is dead, and it is now my own.

*Ld. Sax. (taking her hand).* Pray tell me anything you may have to say to me. My poor son was inexpressibly dear to me, and all that relates to him must interest me deeply. (*He motions to her to be seated. She sits at table.*) Was it not at your house that he fell ill ?

*Ruth.* His friend, Ralph Crampton, brought him to us, very sick with fever. (*Lord SAXMUNDHAM sits.*) We gave him shelter, and I tended him for many weeks, for he was sorely stricken, and like to die. But he was not to die then, and when the fever left him, he told me that he loved me, and bade me become his wife. And as he was very dear to me, I said "Yes," and so my love married me, and we were happy beyond all telling !

*Ld. Sax. (much agitated).* You were married to my son !

*Ruth.* Even so.

*Ld. Sax.* But I knew nothing of this !

*Ruth.* No. It was my wish that he should write and tell you, but he said "No," for you were an old man, and a proud man, and I am but a convict's daughter. (*Lord SAXMUNDHAM overcome.*) He said that if he wrote to tell you this, you would never pardon him. I do not know why, but so he spake ; and all that he said was good and wise in my eyes, and I did not gainsay him. Moreover, I was his wife, and a wife obeys. He told me that he would take me to England, and that then you would see me, and you would know that I was not a wicked woman—and that I had saved your son's life ; and that when you knew this, you would take me to your heart and

call me "daughter"—not the less because my father was a convict. (*Lord SAXMUNDHAM much agitated.*) And in truth his sin was of long ago; and in his old age he was penitent, and he died as a good man should, and I grieved for him as for the best of all fathers, for so, in truth, he was to me!

*Ld. Sax. (aside).* Arthur married! And to the daughter of such a man!

*Ruth.* One day he heard that one had died, and left him great wealth. So it was needful that he should return to England, and that at once. So my love kissed me, and departed, and I never saw him more. But his last kiss is still where he placed it, and his last look is still in my eyes; and I felt his heart beat as he took me unto him, and it is still beating against mine, and his hand is always in my hand—for I loved him dearly, dearly, dearly—and he is dead!

*Ld. Sax.* God help me, if this be true, for it is ruin, indeed!

*Ruth.* I waited for tidings of him, but no tidings came. Week after week went by, and month after month, until nearly a year had passed away. Then came the news: his ship was wrecked, and all had perished! So it was to be. I bowed my head, and wept bitterly—for many days I wept bitterly; and the rough men on the farm said, "Let her bide, for he was brave and good, and they loved one another, and it is good for her that she should weep." And the rough men had tears in their eyes as they spake, and their voices failed them as they bade God bless me. And my heart ached with its very fullness; it had more love in it than it could bear, and there was none to give it to; so I said, "He had a father whom he dearly loved, and a fond mother who prayed every night for him, and a brother who looked up to him. I will take my love to them, and I will lay it at their feet, and when they know how dearly I loved the dead son who was so dear to them, they will not find it in their hearts to turn my love away." And I have come over many miles of stormy sea (*rising*), and I have brought my love with me, and I am here to ask you if you will have it, for my heart is full of it, and he was very dear to me, and he is dead.

*Ld. Sax. (rising).* I will not disguise from you that the news you have brought me amazes and distresses me beyond measure. If your tale be true—

*Ruth (in astonishment).* If my tale be true? Wherefore should it not be true?

*Ld. Sax.* You are no doubt provided with proofs?

*Ruth.* Yes; for Noel Ross bade me bring them with

me. Here is my marriage certificate, and here is my darling's will, witnessed by Mr. Paulby and Noel Ross, who married us.

*Ld. Sax. (reading the document).* "I hereby devise and bequeath unto my dear wife, Ruth Redmayne, all my real and personal estate, whatever and wheresoever, for her absolute use and benefit." I see no reason to doubt your word. (*Returning the documents.*) It may well be as you have said. But I need not tell you that to such a marriage I should never have consented. You must be aware that to ask me to take to my heart, as my daughter, the daughter of a man in your father's unhappy position—pardon me if I speak plainly—is not reasonable. No, not reasonable. [*Leans against mantelpiece.*]

*Ruth.* I know little of such matters. It was my poor dead father who sinned; it was not I. I have heard that you are a great lord. I do not know what that means, for I have lived at Brunt's Station all my life, and at Brunt's Station all men are alike. I know little, save that I loved your son; that he is very dear to me; and that he is dead. That is all.

*Ld. Sax.* The news that you bring me is of graver import than you seem to imagine. In the full belief that my poor son died unmarried, I claimed his estate; and the claim has been allowed. But it is clear to me that the wealth I thought was mine, is yours; and I have no claim to it.

*Ruth.* But this may not be! I knew nothing of this! I am not here for money! I am your son's widow, and my heart yearns to you; and that is why I am here. For you are his father, and I would be a daughter unto you, and all that I have is yours; and I pray you take it, for you are his father, and he is dead.

*Ld. Sax. (taking her hand).* You speak kindly and generously; but you do not understand these matters. It is impossible that such a thing could be. Pray do not speak of this again. You are kind and good, I am sure, and you would not willingly give me pain. You would do well to go to my solicitor at once, and I will instruct him to afford you every possible facility to enable you to establish your claim to my son's estate. Leave me, madam, I pray—I would be alone.

[*RUTH pauses; kisses his hand; walks slowly out.* LORD SAXMUNDHAM burst into tears as the Act drop falls.

## ACT III.

SCENE.—*Same.* The table L.C.\* should be brought down level with the settee R.C., for this Act.

LORD SAXMUNDHAM enters with Mr. PARFIT.

*Ld. Sax. (seated).* The surrender of the estate, Mr. Parfit, can be made at once.

*Par. (seated).* This very day. The mortgagee, Mr. Crampton, attended, as agreed at the Rolls, made the usual affidavit, and applied for and obtained a final order of foreclosure. That order is the title deed shutting out your lordship's equity to redeem.

*Ld. Sax.* But the surrender—how is that to be effected?

*Par.* That must be done, of course, by a deed under seal. As you are anxious to conclude this matter to-day, I will endorse a short deed on the mortgage, which your lordship and Mr. Crampton will execute.

*Ld. Sax.* That is all you have to say?

*Par.* As your legal adviser, that is all I have to say. But I think I am more than a legal adviser. I believe I am entitled to look upon myself as a friend.

*Ld. Sax.* Most certainly, a friend.

*Par.* Thank you. Then speaking as a friend—as a very true and devoted friend—let me implore you to consider whether you are acting reasonably in not making an effort to preserve this old property? When Mr. Crampton is made acquainted with the circumstances, he will surely give time. Moreover, there are a dozen of your friends who would gladly afford you every facility. Even I myself, or my partner——

*Ld. Sax.* Mr. Parfit, I will not hear you on this subject. Brantinghame is mortgaged to the very crows' nests. An appeal to Mr. Crampton's consideration is absolutely out of the question: and if I were to borrow money to stave off the evil day, I should be staving it off—that is all—and that with money for which I can offer no adequate security. I have said enough.

*Par.* But the old place, in which nine generations of Saxmundhams have been born, and have lived, and died!

*Ld. Sax.* Mr. Parfit, I protest that these considerations should not be submitted to me. These are points that I have

no right to consider. Let me hear no more of this, I pray. Nay, sir, I insist.

*Par.* As your lordship pleases. Your lordship has made me feel that I have outstripped my duty. *[Rising to go.]*

*Ld. Sax.* No, Parfit, no, my dear old friend (*Taking Parfit's hand.*) Pardon me, if I spoke harshly, but I—I am much upset. I am an old man, and not strong—no, not strong. So you will pardon me, I know, and you will believe that all I would have said is, that I am resolved, and that I must not be gainsaid. I would have said this gently, Parfit, but—I am unstrung.

*Par.* Pray say no more. It must be—that is certain; Mr. Crampton is due in ten minutes. I will get the papers together without delay. *[Exit PARFIT.]*

*Ld. Sax. (at fireplace).* Yes, it must be. Oh, my old home, my old home!

*Enter LADY SAXMUNDHAM.*

*Lady Sax.* Has Mr. Parfit gone?

*Ld. Sax. (seated).* Yes, Janet, Mr. Parfit has gone.

*Lady Sax.* He can give us no hope?

*Ld. Sax.* There is no room for hope. With hope we have done. Janet, the old Hall in which three centuries of Redmaynes have lived and died, must go!

*Lady Sax. (quietly).* Then I will make the necessary preparations.

*Ld. Sax.* We shall be poor, Janet.

*Lady Sax.* That will matter but little, Saxmundham. We must live quietly.

*Ld. Sax.* Very poor, Janet.

*Lady Sax.* Well, we must live very quietly, my dear. That is all.

*Ld. Sax.* Janet, we are ruined! *[Breaks down.]*

*Lady Sax. (going to him and sitting on his L.).* My husband! My love of fifty years ago! My love, my cherished love of today! Come, be brave. There is such a thing as ruin, but take heart, my dear, it has not come to us yet.

*Ld. Sax.* Why, Janet, my girl, we have nothing left!

*Lady Sax.* Nay, we have much, for we have each other.

*Ld. Sax.* Yes, it is true. I ask your pardon. We have much, for we have each other.

*Lady Sax.* In this half century, we have seen many changes. Children have been born to us, they have grown to manhood, and they have died in the very flower of their lives. Friends

have fallen around us as leaves in autumn. Our fortunes, that rose with the dawn of life have set with its setting sun. But, throughout our changing fate, our love of long ago has been true to us—it has never quitted us, even for one brief hour. Let us thank God for this true and staunch friend, for throughout it has been our most precious possession, and we have it still.

*Ld. Sax.* My own dear lady!

*Lady Sax.* In pain, sorrow and sickness, in the birth-chamber, in the death-chamber, have we not turned to one another for comfort, and have we ever turned in vain?

*Ld. Sax.* No, no! Never! Never! (*They rise.*) As we were to one another in the sweet old days of courtship, when life was bright, and hope was young and strong, so are we now in the evening of our days—so shall we be, till the long night comes. For I am as I have ever been, your ladyship's most devoted and most faithful lover!

[*Kisses her hand with old-fashioned courtesy.*]

*Enter ALARIC.*

*Alar.* Father, I hear that you want to speak to me.

*Ld. Sax.* Alaric, my dear boy, I have just broken some grievous news to your dear mother, and she has borne it superbly. It will affect you seriously, my boy. Bear it as she has done

*Alar.* Why, what has happened?

*Ld. Sax.* My dear child, a fortnight ago you told your mother of your attachment to the daughter of my old friend Thursby. Mabel will be rich—very rich, and I had good reason to believe that your own fortune would, in some measure, balance hers. But that is so no longer. I am a penniless old man, and you will have to make your own way. To do this, it will be necessary that you go to India for some years. Under these circumstances, it is your duty, my dear fellow, to absolve Mabel from her promise. [*Goes up.*]

*Alar.* Absolve Mabel from her promise!

[*Crosses to LADY SAXMUNDHAM.*]

*Lady S. (on sofa).* Oh, my poor boy!

*Ld. Sax. (coming down).* For a time. You will have little, very little to live upon, and no son of mine would ever lay himself open to the suspicion of being a fortune-hunter. So you will give me your promise not to take advantage of the regard that the child has for you, but to explain to her, frankly and honourably, the position in which you are placed.

*Alar.* I will tell her, of course; but am I never to see her again? Oh, mother! [*Turning to* LADY SAXMUNDHAM.

*Lady Sax. (rising).* It is, perhaps, better, my child, that you should not see her for a while. But, if I know, my boy, that is a matter that we can surely leave to his sense of duty.

*Alar.* But Mabel would never give me up because I am poor!

*Ld. Sax.* My son, Mabel is a child. In two or three years she will be a woman, but at present she is a child. She is rich—you are penniless. To a son of mine, I need say no more. Come, Janet. [*Exit* LORD SAXMUNDHAM.

*Alar.* Oh mother, mother!

*Lady Sax. (crossing to L. c.).* It is hard to bear, my poor boy, but your father is right. Come, come, be brave, and tell the little maid gently and tenderly, as a brave man should. She will not love you the less, take my word for it.

[*Exit* LADY SAXMUNDHAM.

*Alar.* It's awfully hard. I suppose it's all right, but if I can't see it myself, how can I expect to make it clear to her? Here she comes. Now for it! It will be awfully difficult!

*Enter* MABEL.

*Mab.* Alaric, I've great news for you. I'm to play in the Brantwich tournament—the best of three seats, the winning side to play each other single. Why, how grave you look!

*Alar.* Mabel—Miss Thursby—

*Mab. (amused).* Miss Thursby!

*Alar.* It is my duty to break to you a piece of distressing news. My father has lost all his money.

*Mab.* What a pity! Papa has several sovereigns in his purse—he's with Mrs. Redmayne in the library—I'll go and tell him. [*Going.*

*Alar.* No, don't do that. He has lost more than Mr. Thursby is in the habit of carrying in his pocket. He has lost three hundred and fifty thousand pounds!

*Mab.* Oh dear!

[*Drops into chair.*

*Alar.* When I did myself the honour to propose for your hand—

*Mab.* Alaric! Are you mad?

*Alar.* Well, when I told you how awfully I loved you, I believed I was rich. I am now quite poor, and my father tells me that it is my duty to release you from your promise.

*Mab.* But I don't want to be released! I wouldn't be released for the world! And as if you were doing me a favour, too! [*Turning to L. c.*

*Alar.* Miss Thursby, I am doing you a justice. I must go to India for some years, and I've promised my father that, in the meantime, I will abstain from communicating with you, except on the footing of a mere acquaintance. For, as he says very truly, you are not old enough to judge for yourself.

*Mab. (turning to ALARIO).* That's very rude of him. Surely seventeen is the very prime of life!

*Alar. (bowing gravely).* It would certainly seem so.

*Mab.* Then we are to be Mr. Redmayne and Miss Thursby, I suppose, in future.

*Alar.* Yes; I believe that is what happens when an engagement is broken of. (*Takes her hand mechanically.*) I beg your pardon. (*Releases it.*) Force of habit.

*Mab. (seated).* Then, Mr. Redmayne, I am greatly concerned to hear of your serious loss.

*Alar.* Miss Thursby, accept my sincere thanks for your sympathetic condolence. [*ALARIO sits on sofa.*]

*Mab.* I presume that the loss of your fortune will not materially affect your political principles, Mr. Redmayne?

*Alar.* No, Miss Thursby. Nothing has happened to shake my conviction that property should be equally divided. In fact, I am more of that opinion than ever. May I trust that separation from your political preceptor will not endanger the stability of your own convictions?

*Mab. (rising, enthusiastically).* No; I shall always be an out-and-out Radical, in memory of the dear old days of poetry and sentiment! It is a Radical that I am, isn't it, Ric?

[*Crossing to ALARIO.*]

*Alar.* Yes, Mab. Oh, I forgot.

*Mab.* So did I!

*Alar.* Accept, I beg, my sincere apologies, Miss Thursby. [*Rises.*]

*Mab.* Mr. Redmayne, we were both in fault. So you are going away for two years?

*Alar.* Yes, two or three years!

*Mab. (sighing).* It's a long time to be separated from you, dear Mr. Redmayne! I suppose I may say, "dear Mr. Redmayne?"

*Alar.* Well, I don't know. It's rather strong, isn't it, to a mere acquaintance?

*Mab.* Why, I should say that at the beginning of a letter to a mere acquaintance!

*Alar.* True, so you would. It's a very good test. I think "dear Mr. Redmayne" may be conceded.

*Mab.* Dear, dear Mr. Redmayne!

[*Sighing.*]



*Alar.* Dear, dear Miss Thursby!

[*Sighing.*

*Mab.* Then I suppose I may say that I am yours faithfully? Because that is what I should say at the end of a letter to a mere acquaintance.

*Alar.* True: you would say, "yours truly," or "yours faithfully." I think "yours faithfully" may be conceded.

*Mab.* Then I am yours, Ric—yours—yours—faithfully—oh, how faithfully! Always, always faithfully! So faithfully! So faithfully!

[*Sobs in his arms.*

*Alar.* And I am yours—yours, Mab—so truly, oh, so truly! Ever, ever, most truly yours!

[*Embrace. MABEL then withdraws herself demurely; goes towards door stops, turns and looks at ALARIC—they are about to rush into each other's arms, but they suddenly check themselves.*

*Mab.* Good morning, Mr. Redmayne!

*Alar.* Good morning, Miss Thursby! (*Exit MABEL.*) How true it is a fellow never knows what he can do till he tries. If anyone had told me, an hour ago, that I could have schooled myself to address Mabel upon a footing of the coldest and most ceremonious formality, I should have questioned his sanity!

[*Exit ALARIC.*

*Enter RALPH CRAMPTON and Mr. PARFIT.*

*Par.* If you will take a seat, Mr. Crampton, his lordship will be with you directly.

*Ralph (seated).* Good. I suppose I may take it Mr. Parfit, that Lord Saxmundham is much distressed at losing Brantinghame?

*Par.* He is greatly, terribly distressed, Mr. Crampton, though he bears it with wonderful composure.

*Ralph.* Ha! Mr. Parfit, I'm afraid you think me a very hard-hearted and vindictive creditor.

*Par.* Sir, it is not for me to comment on your action in this matter. His lordship admits that you are well within your rights.

*Ralph.* So I most undoubtedly am. Now, Mr. Parfit, I mean to astonish you. Eighteen months ago, Arthur Redmayne, acting upon information supplied by Lord Saxmundham, inflicted an outrage upon me that might well have constituted me the life-long enemy of both. But I am not the altogether remorseless man you take me to be, and time has, in some sort, dulled the edge of my resentment. I have had the satisfaction of showing Lord Saxmundham that I have him completely



and absolutely at my mercy. That mercy I am disposed to extend.

*Par.* Mr. Crampton, I find it difficult to express my sense of your generosity.

*Ralph.* It is not necessary. I have no desire to pose as a good angel, for I assure you I am nothing of the kind.

*Par.* If you will allow me, I will tell him the good news without delay. [*Going.*]

*Ralph (rising).* No, I wish to tell him myself. Oblige me by saying no more than that I am here, and that I wish to speak to him.

*Par.* As you please, sir. Be sure that I will lose no time.

[*Exit PARFIT.*]

*Ralph (seated on sofa).* Yes, Saxmundham, the account may be said to be closed between us. I have set my heel upon your neck, and to such a man as you, that is punishment enough. It is well for you that I am rich. It is even better for you that I am disposed to remember that my quarrel is not so much with you, as with your dead son.

[*During this speech RUTH crosses the gallery from L. to R., and comes down the stairs.*]

*Ruth.* Ralph Crampton! You here?

*Ralph (rising much agitated).* Mrs. Redmayne! This is a strange meeting: I did not know that you were in England.

[*RUTH pauses for a moment, then moves to leave the room.*]

*Ralph (up stage).* Mrs. Redmayne—pray hear me!

*Ruth (down stage).* I have no wish to hear you. I think of you with terror and shame. Let me pass you.

*Ralph.* Mrs. Redmayne, go if you will; but you have greatly misjudged me. It is perhaps no fault of your own that you have done so, for I have been cruelly misrepresented to you.

*Ruth.* There is no need to say this. I judge you from my own knowledge of your wicked nature.

*Ralph.* Of that nature you know nothing. I loved you deeply, and with an unspeakable devotion. It may be that I had no right to tell you this, but I was carried beyond myself. I was helpless, and, like a madman, I spoke madly. That love has dominated me ever since. It has haunted me as a nightmare—it has wrecked my peace of mind. Tell me to leave you, and I will do so; but, in common mercy, tell me in gentle words.

*Ruth.* It is enough that you, who had a wife, dared to speak of love to me. I care to know no more. [*Crosses to R.*]

*Ralph.* Yes, I had a wife—an unworthy wife, who left me.

Her misconduct was a shame to me, and I hid my shame away. When I spoke to you, I had already taken steps to break the chain that bound me to her. I spoke with the certainty that in a few weeks I should be free. I have proofs of the truth of my words—you cannot refuse to hear them!

*Ruth.* I refuse utterly. It concerns me not to know. I think of you as one to be shunned, and as one would shun a sin. I am set against you.

*Ralph.* (*with suppressed fury*). It is well. I am answered—fully and finally answered. You do not know what you have done. I will tell you. I hold Lord Saxmundham's welfare in the hollow of my hand. It is in my power to ruin him—your dead husband's father—by a stroke of the pen. You understand me? It is in my power to crush the light out of his life, and send him, a miserable pauper, to his grave. I came here to-day with some sort of pity in my heart for the broken old man—with the germ of that which, under fostering circumstances, would have developed into mercy. But such an insult—such an atrocious insult—as you have placed upon me, it is not within man's nature to endure. There is no room within me for mercy; so with mercy I have done. [*Turns away to L.C.*]

*Ruth.* Mr. Crampton——

*Ralph.* It is useless to appeal. You have spoken words that cannot be withdrawn.

*Ruth.* Mr. Crampton, I am not a woman who withdraws her words. I speak plainly, and my words tell you what is in my heart. Still, it may be that you will not do this thing. You are my enemy, for the words that I have spoken. That is natural. But to strike at me through a helpless old man, who is dear to me—to stifle the mercy that had begun to plead for him, because I, who am nothing to him, have angered you, is the act of a coward; and it may well be, Ralph Crampton, that you are not a coward. [*Exit RUTH.*]

*Ralph.* A curse on the ill-fortune that caused you to cross my path at such an hour! You count on my love? Yes, I love you, but take heed, Ruth Redmayne, for there is a love that is more like hate than hate itself!

*Enter LORD SAXMUNDHAM and MR. PARFIT.*

*Ld. Sax.* Sir, I have come to hear what you have to say to me. Mr. Parfit is my solicitor, and I prefer that what takes place between us should take place in his presence.

[*PARFIT sits at table.*]

*Ralph.* Lord Saxmundham, I have little to say that it will

please you to hear. I am here, as arranged, to take over your equity of redemption.

*Par. (rising.)* Mr. Crampton! Sir!

*Ld. Sax. (seated).* Hush, I pray. (*To RALPH.*) Sir you will understand that when I undertook that the mortgage debt and interest should be paid into Court at a given day, I believed myself to be a man of wealth and substance. I—I have since been undeceived. I am advised that the surrender must be under seal, and Mr. Parfit is prepared to endorse such a deed on the mortgage.

*Par.* Mr. Crampton!—nay, my lord, I will speak! Sir, you have most cruelly misled me as to the object of your visit. You told me that you came to inform his lordship that you were disposed to be merciful——

*Ld. Sax. (peremptorily).* Mr. Parfit, I insist that you will not speak of mercy in relation to myself! On pain of my displeasure, sir! It is not a word that I am accustomed to introduce into my dealings with my creditors. The money is due, and I cannot pay it. That is all. Mr. Parfit, you will be so obliging as to prepare the surrender without delay.

*Enter RUTH and MR. THURSBY, hurriedly.*

*Thurs.* One moment, Saxmundham——

*Ruth.* Stay, Lord Saxmundham. I must speak to you.

*Ld. Sax.* This is an unaccountable interruption. Thursby, what does it mean?

*Thurs.* It means, Saxmundham, that this poor great-hearted lady has just learnt that you are in grave trouble, and she insisted upon coming to you at once. I am ashamed to say that I did my best to prevent her, but, thank Heaven, ineffectually!

*Ruth.* Yes, you must listen to me. I came to England to be a daughter to a bereaved father—not to take an old man's inheritance from him. If you will not take the wealth that was your son's you cannot at least, prevent my paying this man his claim.

*Ld. Sax.* Madamo, I thank you, but it is impossible for me to entertain such a proposal.

*Thurs. (standing behind LORD SAXMUNDHAM).* Now, Saxmundham, don't be Quixotic. There will be no obligation on either side. Reduced to its elements, Mrs. Redmayne, who is one of the shrewdest women of business I ever met, invests £18,000 at 4½ per cent. on unimpeachable security! Capital woman of business, Mrs. Redmayne!

*Ralph.* I may state at once that I decline to treat with this lady. The transaction to which she refers is one with which she has no concern. Lord Saxmundham understands me?

*Ld. Sax.* I understand you, sir. I am ready.

*Thurs. (crossing to RALPH).* Mr. Crampton, confound you; this is sheer vindictiveness. Saxmundham, you ought to know the truth. Eighteen months ago, that scoundrel pestered this poor lady with disgraceful attentions. You did, sir! you know you did! She repelled him with the scorn he deserved. You did, ma'am you know you did!—and your son thrashed him for his audacity. He did, sir! you know he did! This is the scoundrel's revenge. Baulk him, my dear Saxmundham—baulk him, and society will owe you a debt of gratitude!

[*Crossing to LD. SAXMUNDHAM.*

*Ld. Sax.* Thursby, I am here to discharge an obligation—not to contract one. Be so good as to spare me any further discussion. Mr. Parfit, is the endorsement ready?

[*THURSBY retires up with LD. SAXMUNDHAM.*

*Par. (writing at table).* In one moment, my lord.

*Ruth. (seated).* Oh, is there no way? Is there no way?

*Ralph. (aside to RUTH, standing on her L., behind table).* Yes, there is one way, and only one by which this old man may be spared. Mrs. Redmayne, there is yet time, but the time is brief. Give me the love for which I have so long waited, and even at this eleventh hour, I stay my hand. For heaven's sake, think before you decide finally and for ever!

*Ruth. (aside to RALPH).* And will nothing else content you?

*Ralph.* Nothing.

*Ruth.* Then God help me; there is, as you say, but one way, and only one. Ralph Crampton, when you lie upon your deathbed, you will remember that you have driven me to this!

*Ralph.* Ruth, bear with me. I swear to you that you shall never repent having taken this step.

*Ruth.* I trust not. I do not know; but I trust not. Yet it is terrible. Oh! the shame of it! The bitter, bitter shame of it!

*Par. (to LORD SAXMUNDHAM, who has returned the deed to PARFIT).* Now, my lord, be good enough to sign here, if you please.

*Ld. Sax.* Good

[*about to sign.*

*Ralph.* Stop! This lady has something to say that it is important you should hear,

LADY SAXMUNDHAM enters, and hears what follows.

RALPH comes down L. of I. C. table.

*Ruth.* It is true. Lord Saxmundham, a fortnight since you reproached me with having allowed your son to marry me—I, a convict's daughter; an outcast; a thing to be thought of with a shudder, if thought of at all. It is a blot upon your honour that your son should have stooped to this. It would have been better, would it not, that he had sinned in any way, rather than in this? Be of good cheer, Lord Saxmundham; your son did not act as shamefully as you believe. I told you I was his wife. I lied! (*All start; RALPH says "What!"*) I lied, Ralph Crampton! I was no wife of his! I was no wife of his!

*Lord S.* Madam!

*Thurs.* Great heaven!

*Ralph.* Ruth, are you mad?

*Par.* But the certificate—the will!

*Lady S.* Oh for shame! for shame!

[LADY SAXMUNDHAM comes down to LORD SAXMUNDHAM.

*Ruth.* Aye, for shame, and for shame! Why, Lady Saxmundham, what would you have? Would you not have me make the best of my poor bargain? With such a chance of placing myself well with the world, would you have me neglect that chance, and leave the poor lie untold? (*RUTH advances a step towards LADY SAXMUNDHAM, who shrinks from her.*) But there is something of good in us all—even in such poor lost souls as I! When I, in my unblushing hardihood, claimed to be your son's wife, I did not know that by so doing I was robbing you of your inheritance. Keep your own, my lord, keep your own, and leave me to my legacy of untold shame!

[*RUTH rushes from the room. LORD SAXMUNDHAM down stage, RALPH falls into seat and covers his face with his hands.*

QUICK ACT DROP.

## ACT IV.

SCENE—*Morning Room at Mr. THURSBY'S. Small writing table R., sofa, C., doorway with pbrtiere in flat R.C., doors R. and L., garden seen through bay window L.C. MR. THURSBY discovered writing at table R. Flowers, work tables, &c., about the room.* He rings as curtain rises.

*Enter PARKER, a butler.*

*Thurs.* Parker, Mrs. Redmayne is leaving us unexpectedly to-day. Tell Watts to have the brougham here in time to catch the 4.25 for London.

*Par.* Very good, Sir.

*[Exit PARKER.]*

*Thurs.* Pleasant piece of business to have to ask one's guest to go! By George, I'd sooner have lost my right arm than that this should have happened! If ever there lived a woman to whose integrity I could have sworn affidavits without number, that woman is the very woman who has turned out to be one of the most bare-faced impostors of ancient or modern history! And to think that my Mabel has been on terms of the closest affection with her for the last fortnight! But that woman's face would deceive an Old Bailey solicitor! (*crosses to L.C.*) Here she comes. Now for it!

*Enter RUTH.*

*Ruth (up stage).* Mr. Thursby, will you let me speak to you?

*Thurs.* Madam, I—I do not know how to deal with you. I am shocked, amazed beyond measure, by the disclosures you have made. There is something else which, as Mabel's father, I ought to say to you; but, confound it, I can't say it! If you've any sympathy with the particularly awkward position in which I find myself, you'll say it for me. *[Crosses to R.]*

*Ruth.* You would say that it is not fitting that such a woman as I should remain in your house. You have an innocent daughter, and I am not fit to be with her. That is just. I will be a burden to you no longer. *[Sits on sofa.]*

*Thurs.* Can't you think of anything to say that would make one forgive you? Haven't you such a thing about you as an excuse that one could hang on to? Hang it, ma'am, have you no invention?

*Ruth.* I have nothing to add to what I have already said.

*Thurs. (ruefully).* Well ma'am, then I suppose I've no right to oppose your intention to go. I dare say I ought to be glad to get rid of you. But I've grown to be very fond of you, ma'am—very fond indeed—and—and you've behaved abominably—and—and—(*Enter MABEL*). Now, Mabel, my good girl, why do you invariably come in at highly inconvenient moments?

*Mab.* Papa, I'm very sorry. I did not know you were busy. [*Going.*]

*Ruth (down).* Mr. Thursby, I want very much to speak to Mabel. (*Aside to THURSBY.*) I pray that you will not refuse me this. It is for the last time. I—I will do her no harm.

*Thurs.* Well, I don't know. I oughtn't to, you know. But there—there's a hat-fall of good in you, I verily believe—and its for the last time, poor soul. (*Crosses to R.*) Poor soul! Poor soul! [*Exit THURSBY R.*]

*Mab.* Mrs. Redmayne, what has distressed you? Why have you been weeping?

*Ruth (on sofa.)* Why have I been weeping, my dear? Why, I bring you good news, and when we bring good news to those we love, our hearts swell, and you see that is why I weep.

*Mab (sitting on her R.)* You bring good news to me?

*Ruth.* Yes, great news. I have just left Lord Saxmundham. He was mistaken in believing that ruin had come upon him. He is rich and happy, and it should not be needful that Alaric should leave you, and so a burden will be lifted from your own heart, and your father will be glad when he sees that his little daughter's eyes are bright again!

*Mab.* Alaric will not go away from me! Oh, Mrs. Redmayne, you have done this! [*Kneeling on RUTH'S R.*]

*Ruth.* Yes. Do not ask me more. I have done this.

*Mab.* If there is any virtue in the prayers of two broken-hearted lovers, whom stern necessity has placed upon a footing of mere acquaintanceship, they are yours from the bottom of our hearts! [*Kisses her.*]

*Ruth.* And now, my child, I am going to make you sorry. A great trouble has befallen me, and it is needful that I return at once to Australia.

*Mab.* Oh, Mrs. Redmayne, are you saying "good-bye" to me?

*Ruth.* I have something more to say than "good-bye." I may never see you again, and I ask you to promise me, if ever you hear ill of me, not to believe it, but to believe that there is something kept back—something which, if it were known, would clear me of all blame. It will gladden me to know,



when I am far away, that there is one little heart in England into which my memory may creep for shelter, when the pitiless storm breaks upon it.

*Mab.* Oh, I promise! I promise! never, never, never will I believe any one who says anything against you! Oh, Mrs. Redmayne, tell them what it is, and look at them with those brave, steadfast, truthful eyes, and they will believe!

*Ruth.* It would be useless, Mabel. (*Rising.*) And now, good-bye, my dear! Oh, my dear, good-bye!

[*Embraces her—then turns towards the door—stops, turns—they rush into each other's arms. Then exit RUTH.*]

*Enter THURSBY.*

*Thurs.* (*to Mabel, who is sobbing on the sofa.*) Mabel, my girl! Come, come, you mustn't cry like this!

*Mab.* Oh, she's going—going from me, never to return! [*Sobs.*]

*Thurs.* Well, yes, she certainly is going—that is to say—oh, yes, she's going.

*Mab.* But why is she going, and why don't you stop her?

*Thurs.* Why, she's going because she—well, she has an appointment with her solicitor in Australia—and she's got some shopping to do in Sydney.

*Mab.* (*rising.*) I don't believe a word of it. There's some wicked plot to send her away. (*THURSBY interrupts her with attempts to explain.*) But I'll find out what it is, if I die for it, you great, big, cruel, hard-hearted papa! [*Exit MABEL.*]

*Thurs.* Now, why will women do things that can't be explained to young girls? A woman ought always to argue thus: "Can what I'm going to do be explained to young girls? No, it cannot. Then, dash my wig, if I do it!"

*Enter PARKER.*

*Par.* (*announcing.*) Mr. Parfit.

*Enter PARFIT. Exit PARKER.*

*Thurs.* Hallo, Parfit! Well, here's a pretty kettle of fish!

*Par.* Yes, Mr. Thursby; it certainly is extremely serious.

[*Sits on sofa.*]

*Thurs.* There's a thundering lot of good in that woman, you know!

*Par.* Yes, I daresay there is. There's good in all of us, if we only knew it. But I suppose it is unnecessary to remind you

that by uttering a forged will, to say nothing of the other documents, she has brought herself within the pale of the law?

*Thurs.* Well, what then? You don't expect me to prosecute her, I suppose?

*Par.* As you please, Mr. Thursby. But it's my duty to remind you, as one of the trustees under the will which this forgery was intended to set aside, that if you don't prosecute her, you will be compounding a felony.

*Thurs.* Felony, be hanged! It's a family matter, entirely between ourselves. How is it to get about? [*Crosses to R.C.*]

*Par.* You forget Mr. Crampton. He is her declared and relentless enemy. If he should persist in prosecuting this unhappy woman, what would you do?

*Thurs.* My dear Parfit, what an absurd question. Break every bone in his body, of course! 'The thing's obvious.

*Par. (rising).* Well, Mr. Thursby, I've no wish to see this poor lady punished; but it was my duty to advise you, and I've done it.

*Thurs.* It was as you say, my dear Parfit, your duty to advise me, and it was equally my duty to pitch your advice to the devil. Very good; you've done your duty, and I've done mine. It's a pleasant reflection. Let's shake hands on it.

*RALPH CRAMPTON has entered during this speech.*

*Ralph (down L.C.).* Mr. Thursby, I must ask you to hear me on this matter.

*Thurs.* Mr. Crampton, I prefer to have nothing to say to you.

*Ralph.* Very likely, but you must and shall hear me!

*Thurs. (with suppressed rage).* Mr. Crampton! sir! I can guess the abominable motive which has prompted you to present yourself here. Anticipating this interview, I have taken the precaution, as a magistrate, to bind myself over to keep the peace towards all her Majesty's subjects for the space of three calendar months. That will give you a good start, sir! I advise you to make the most of it.

*Ralph.* Mr. Thursby, I have something of graver import to deal with than any terms of reproach you can frame. I have been witness, this afternoon, to an act of heroic devotion on the part of a most pure and blameless lady. It has moved me as I am not wont to be moved; the more so because my indefensible conduct is the cause of the inestimable sacrifice she has made.

RUTH *has entered unobserved.*

*Thurs.* Why, what do you mean, sir?

*Ralph.* That Mrs. Redmayne, in denying her marriage, has uttered the noblest falsehood that ever fell from the lips of woman. I know Mr. Noel Ross, and I had it from his own lips, after Arthur Redmayne's departure, that he had solemnised this marriage.

*Thurs. (turning to RUTH).* Madam, is this true?

*Ruth (up stage).* It is true. [*THURSBY grasps her hand.*]

*Ralph.* It is impossible for me to approach Lord Saxmundham on the subject, so I have brought my repentance to you, in the belief that you will be willing to turn it to this blameless lady's advantage. I beg you most earnestly, in the name of common justice, to communicate with Mr. Noel Ross, that my statement may be corroborated.

*Thurs.* Now, if any one will show me how to treat an infernal rascal who has done an uncommonly fine thing, I shall be personally indebted to him! [*Crosses to R.*]

*Ralph.* I put forth no plea for consideration. I have most deeply wronged this lady, and I will leave nothing undone until I have atoned. [*Going L.*]

*Ruth.* Mr. Crampton—before you go, will you let me tell you that, from my heart, I pity and pardon you? It will, perhaps, comfort you in the days to come to remember this.

*Ralph.* Mrs. Redmayne, I believe there is no act of generosity of which you are not capable. From my very heart I thank you. [*Exit RALPH CRAMPTON.*]

*Thurs.* Now, there's a fellow I should like to knock down with one hand and pick up with the other! (*To RUTH, taking her hand in his.*) My dear young lady—my very dear young lady, I deserve to be kicked for having believed you. If you're an average sample of Australian produce, the sooner a ship-load of you is shot into London society the better! Parfit, Lord Saxmundham is a stickler for nobility. Let us go and prove to him that Heaven has blessed him with the noblest daughter in England! [*Exeunt THURSBY and PARFIT.*]

*Ruth.* Ralph Crampton, your heart was slow to turn; your eyes were closed. To open them it needed that a woman should clothe herself with shame. That has been done; and now, you see

*Enter PARKER with card.*

*Par.* A gentleman wishes to see you, ma'am.

*Ruth.* To see me! Who can wish to see me? [*Reads card.*]

Noel Ross! Noel Ross in England! Oh, let me go to him at once.

[*Going to R.C.*]

*Enter* NOEL ROSS.

*Ross.* No need, my dear Ruth. He is here.

*Ruth.* Noel Ross! Noel Ross! My dear old friend! I never thought to see you again. (*Taking his hands and kissing them.*) You will not wonder that the tears come into my eyes, for I am weak and ill, and you recall the happiness that is gone!

*Ross.* Yes, yes; it's gone, my dear—yes, it's gone!

*Ruth.* And you have come to England to stay?

*Ross.* Yes. I've a year's leave of absence.

*Ruth.* A whole year!

*Ross.* A whole year.

*Ruth.* And shall you live in London?

*Ross.* No, my dear. Dangerous place, London. Can't trust myself in London. No; I've taken a solitary cottage in the Isle of Gabba—one of the outer Hebrides. A little shooting, plenty of fishing, and no female society of any kind whatever. Oh, a man's uncommonly safe in the Isle of Gabba!

*Ruth* (*taking him to sofa. He sits R., she sits L.*) And you must tell me all about the Station. and the farm people, and all about your voyage; and—oh, Noel Ross, I cry for very joy at seeing you again!

*Ross.* My dear child, it's very kind of you, but if you cry I shall make a fool of myself. Now let's talk of something else. The voyage: well, Ruth, we had a rough time of it—a very rough time of it. For many days the sky was dark, and the winds howled, and the sun went down, and we scarcely knew it; and the sun rose again, and it mattered little, for there was darkness everywhere. For six weary days we battled with the fierce sea, but on the seventh, when we were preparing for the great change, a streak of grey light shone in the dark horizon, and we watched this rift very eagerly, for it was our only chance of life. And the rift spread and widened, and the sullen clouds rolled away before it, and the wind was hushed, and the sea fell, and hope grew into certainty, for the sky was now blue and bright with the promise of life. (*Soft music to end of piece.*) And this taught us that hope should not die while there is a chance of life—be it never so remote—never so faint; and we called to mind stories of shipwrecked men who had been cast away for months on desert islands, and had been counted as dead, but who nevertheless had lived—under great privations and great sufferings—but had nevertheless lived, to

rejoice the souls and brighten the lives of their fathers—and their mothers—and their children—and their loving, faithful, mourning wives!

*Ruth (who has become hysterical during the latter part of this speech).* Noel Ross! Noel Ross! Why do you speak of mourning wives to me? [Rising.

*Ross (rising).* Now, my dear, be calm; bear this like a good and brave woman.

*Ruth.* Tell me all! You speak in parable! You could not tell me of such things, unless—Oh speak—speak!

*Ross.* My dear child, there is a happiness so overwhelming, that it calls for all our strength to bear it!

ARTHUR REDMAYNE rushes in, and folds RUTH in his arms.  
ROSS crossing behind him.

*Red.* Ruth, my own Ruth!

*Ruth.* My husband! my husband! Oh, my husband!

*Red.* Ruth, my darling, look up—I am alive and well! I have come to be with you, my own! to love, to cherish, and to comfort you until death comes to us in very deed! Look up, my darling, we will never part again! [Puts her over to R.).

[RUTH shows symptoms of fainting—recovers—looks at her husband—then seems likely to faint again. She steadies herself with an effort, turns to NOEL ROSS, and as she kneels, says, "Let us pray!"

# CREATURES OF IMPULSE.

*A MUSICAL FAIRY TALE*

IN ONE ACT,

*First performed at the Royal Court Theatre (under the management  
of Miss M. Litton) on April 2nd, 1871.*

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SERGEANT KLOOQUE	...	...	MR. TERROTT
BOOMBLEHARDT, <i>a Miser</i>	...	...	MR. RIGHTON
PETER, <i>a Young Farmer</i>	...	...	MISS MAGGIE BRENNAN
JACQUES, <i>a Villager</i>	...	...	MR. PARRY
MARTHA, <i>Landlady of the Three Pigeons</i>			MISS BUFTON
PIPETTE, <i>her Niece</i>	...	...	MISS BISHOP
A STRANGE OLD LADY	...	...	MISS LUCY FRANKLEIN

*Villagers, etc.*

COSTUMES—ALSATIAN.

# CREATURES OF IMPULSE.

SCENE.—*Exterior of "The Three Pigeons," a Country Inn ; entrance to inn, R. ; entrance through gate, C.*

JACQUES and VILLAGERS *discovered.*

OPENING CHORUS.

Did you ever know a lady  
So particularly shady,  
Though a very nice old party she was thought to be ?  
I could see upon my honour,  
When I first set eyes upon her,  
That she wasn't any better than she ought to be.

*Enter BOOMBLEHARDT, L., with a very large bag of gold—they shake hands with him.*

*Boumblehardt.* I give you good morning, ladies. I give you good morning, Peter.

*Jacques.* What, for nothing ?

*Boom.* Yes, I don't charge for it.

*1st Villager.* Why, Master Boumblehardt, you're getting liberal in your old age.

*Boom.* Yes, my dear, yes—he's but a churl that keeps all his happiness to himself. It's a lovely day! the very trees are waving their long arms in ecstasy at the bright blue sky above them, and the bright green fields below them; and the pretty little birds are carolling a hymn of gratitude from their very topmost branches. It is indeed a good morning, and I give it you—I give it you!

*Jacques.* You've got some more happiness in that long bag of yours, if one may judge by the chink of it. Can't you spare some of that ?

*Boom.* Ha, ha! Do you know what that is? It's go-o-o-old!  
*2nd V.* All gold ?

*Boom.* Yes, my dear, all go-o-o-old! It's my poor little rents that I've been collecting.



1st V. And are you going to keep it all to yourself?

Boom. No, no, I'm not so bad as that! I'm going to give you a little treat with it—a little treat.

All. A treat!

Boom. Yes, my dears, a treat! Have you any money of your own?

2nd V. Not a penny.

Boom. Not a penny? Very good. The greatest pleasure in this world is the possession of money. Now that is a pleasure you can't have, because you don't possess any. The next greatest pleasure is looking at other people's money, and it's in my power to give you that pleasure, and shall I grudge it to you? No! See! (*Handling gold.*) Isn't it pretty! It's all go-o-o-old! Real golden guineas!

All. Oh, shabby, shabby!

Boom. There's gratitude for you! Well, it's the way of the world; but, do what I will, I cannot please people. Where's Mistress Martha?

*Enter PETER.*

Peter. She's inside, trying to induce her strange old lady to go.

Boom. What strange old lady?

Peter. Why, a wicked old woman who has been staying at the "Three Pigeons" for the last six weeks. She won't pay any rent, and she won't go; but here comes Martha—she'll tell you all about it.

*Enter MARTHA, from inn, very angry.*

Martha. Well, it's no use, she won't budge.

Boom. How do do, Mistress Martha, I give you good morning. I've been collecting my rents, and I want a room at the Three Pigeons to-night.

Martha. Do you? Then you can't have one. [*Sitting.*]

Boom. Can't have one?

Martha. No. Unless my strange old lady turns out. And she won't!

1st V. But why don't you seize her baggage?

Martha. She hasn't got any.

2nd V. Stop her food, then!

Martha. I have, and she doesn't mind that. She's eaten nothing at all for three weeks.

3rd V. Nothing at all for three weeks?

Martha. Nothing whatever!

3rd V. Why, she'll be starved!

Martha. No; she says she never felt better in her life. She says that food always disagrees with her!

Peter. It disagrees with me sometimes, but I take it for all that!

1st V. Why don't you turn her out neck and crop?

Martha. Turn out a woman who can live on nothing for three weeks? Why, she's a fairy! She'd be in again through the keyhole in a twinkling!

Peter. I know how to prevent that.

Martha. How?

Peter. Stuff up the key-hole.

Martha. Peter, you're a goose.

*Enter PIPETTE, running from L. U. E.*

Pipette. Oh, aunt, aunt! I've such news for you! (*Sees VILLAGERS.*) Oh, I didn't know anybody was here. Oh, I beg your pardon! Oh, gracious! Oh, how extremely awkward!

Martha. Why, what's the matter with the girl?

Pipette. Oh, I'm so confused!

Martha. Why, what has confused you?

Pipette. Oh, it's all these people! Oh, please go away! Oh, I can't bear people!

Boom. Why, bless the girl, how shy she is!

Martha. Shy! there isn't a greater donkey in the country. Why, there's a portrait of her great grandfather in her bedroom, and she always turns its face to the wall before she does her hair.

Pipette. Well, I've been properly brought up. A young girl can't be too particular.

Peter. But what has happened?

Pipette. Oh, I can't tell you before all these people! Oh, please send them away!

1st V. Oh, I'm sure, if we're in the way—— [*Exit into inn.*]

2nd V. If it's very improper, we wouldn't hear it for the world. But I dare say Mr. Boombelhardt and Peter won't mind. [*Exit into inn.*]

3rd V. Put it to them as delicately as you can, Jenny. A young girl can't be too particular. [*Exit into inn.*]

Boom. Well, now that they're gone, what is it? If it's impudence, whisper!

Pipette. Oh, if you please it's a sergeant, and he's coming here!

Martha. A sergeant! Well, and what is there to blush at in that?

*Pipette.* Oh, but he's such a long sergeant! You can't think what a long sergeant he is! And oh, if you please, he's got a moustache and all sorts of dreadful things.

*Martha.* A sergeant? It must be the famous Sergeant Klooque, who distinguished himself at Johannesburg—he's the bravest soldier in His Majesty's service. This is his native village, and he wrote to me to say that he would be here in the course of the week—on furlough. He's going to make the Three Pigeons his headquarters.

*Pipette.* A live sergeant coming to stop with us?

*Martha.* Certainly.

*Pipette.* Oh, then, if you please, and if it's quite convenient, I should like to retire from the world and go into a monastery.

*Martha.* A monastery? So should I.

*Pipette.* Oh, if you please, I mean a nunnery.

*Peter.* A nunnery? So should I.

*Martha.* Nonsense; stop here and welcome the brave gentleman, and if you don't do it well you shall marry Peter to-morrow. Now, Master Boumblehardt, if you'll step into the house we'll see what we can do for you.

*Boom.* By all means. Allow me to present you with——

*Martha.* With what, for gracious sake?

*Boom.* My arm.

*Exeunt BOUMBLEHARDT and MARTHA into the house.*

*Pipette (crying).* Oh dear, oh dear, what shall I do? I don't know how to welcome a brave gentleman.

*Peter.* Don't welcome him.

*Pipette.* But if I don't I shall have to marry you to-morrow.

*Peter.* Never mind—it'll serve me right.

*Pipette.* But I hate brave gentlemen.

*Peter.* But I am not a brave gentleman.

*Pipette.* You? You're the greatest coward between this and Trent.

*Peter.* I am a coward.

*Pipette.* I hate a brave gentleman, but I detest a coward.

*Peter.* All men are cowards.

*Pipette.* What? Jacques Bonpré, who gave you that thrashing at Bontemps fair, and Pierre Pontois, who tied you on your horse wrong side before, for trotting over his turnips? And Jean Leroux, who dragged you through a horse pond for plundering his egg-roosts?

*Peter.* All cowards?—I've a theory about that. In danger, all men are equally frightened, but some men have the power of concealing their fears—others haven't. I'm one of those who

haven't. Some men are afraid to own that they are frightened—other men are not. I'm one of those who are not.

*Pipette.* Well, at all events Sergeant Klooque is a brave man, and I advise you to be civil to him. Oh dear, oh dear, what shall I do?—How I do hate a man!

*Peter.* So do I.

*Pipette.* Oh, how I wish the world was full of women!

*Peter.* So do I.

*Pipette.* Now, I'm not at all afraid of women.

*Peter.* No more am I.

*Pipette.* I like women.

*Peter.* So do I!

*Pipette.* But men are so—so—so—

*Peter.* Oh, they are—

*Pipette.* What?

*Peter.* So—so. Very so—so.

*Pipette.* I mean they are so fond of staring at one, and putting their arms round one's waist, and squeezing one's hand.

*Peter.* Yes, it's their way; I've done it myself.

*Pipette.* They wink too.

*Peter.* Yes, they would.

*Pipette.* Now, women never wink at me. They let me alone.

*Peter.* They let me alone, too, worse luck.

*Pipette.* You can say what you like to a woman—at least I mean I can. But I can't even look at a man.

*Peter.* You can look at me.

*Pipette.* I don't call you a man.

*Peter.* Well, don't call *him* a man, and then you can say what you like to him. He won't mind it.

*Pipette.* That's impudent.

*Peter.* It's meant to be.

*Pipette.* If you want to be impudent, why don't you be impudent to a man?

*Peter.* Oh, I should be a fool! Why, he'd box my ears!

*Pipette.* And you pretend to love me!

*Peter.* Exactly—I pretend to love you. That's all. It amuses you and gratifies me. (*Aside.*) I'll show her that she's not going to ride rough-shod over me! (*Aloud.*) You've got my snug little farm in your eye.

*Pipette.* Peter!

*Peter.* Well?

*Pipette.* Peter, you're a pig!

*Peter.* A pig?

*Pipette.* A pig!

*Peter.* Then you've got my snug little sty in your eye!

*Enter* SERGEANT KLOOQUE.

*Serg.* Young lady, I salute you! The hero of Johannesburg salutes you!

*Pipette.* Oh, my goodness, he's going to salute me! Peter, if he salutes me, I'll scream!

*Serg.* The young lady appears alarmed?

*Peter.* The young lady is very shy.

*Serg.* Shy?

*Peter.* Yes. You soldiers are such disreputable dogs.

*Pipette.* Oh yes, if you please, sir, you soldiers are such disreputable dogs! Oh, if you please, I didn't mean that! Oh, my! what a dreadful thing to have said!

*Serg.* Some soldiers are—but not the Hussars of the King's Body Guard. Our Colonel is extremely particular.

*Serg.* A soldier of the King's hussars,  
Although a gallant son of Mars;  
To no one may he be gallant,  
Except his mother and his aunt!  
*All.* Except his mother and his aunt!  
*Pipette.* A very proper rule indeed,  
And one that surely should succeed.  
*Peter.* But don't you find it rather slow—  
Monotonous, in fact?

*Serg.* Oh no!  
Each warrior who joins our corps,  
Can count his mothers by the score;  
And as for aunts—as I'm alive—  
Each grenadier has thirty-five!  
*All.* Each grenadier has thirty-five.  
*Peter.* I shouldn't like to serve with him;  
One's aunts are elderly and grim.  
*Pipette.* One's mothers too, as facts will show,  
Are always aged dames.

*Serg.* Oh, no!  
The grimest aunt in all our corps,  
Is seventeen—or little more;  
The oldest mother's age may be,  
A little short of twenty-three!

ENSEMBLE.

*Peter and Pipette.* Oh, Sergeant, I begin to take!  
I'm much afraid that you're a rake!  
*Serg.* My meaning they begin to take,  
It's pretty clear that I'm a rake!

*Enter* MARTHA from inn.

*Martha.* Sergeant Klooque, as I'm alive.

*Serg.* Mistress Martha! Why, how pretty you're grown!

*Martha.* This is indeed a distinction you have conferred on us!

*Pipette.* Oh!

*Martha.* Well, what's the matter with the girl?

*Pipette.* Oh, if you please, I was thinking that the sergeant has had so many distinctions conferred on him, that he can afford to spare us one. Oh, if you please, I didn't mean that! Oh, dear, what have I said!

*Martha.* And what a big man you've grown! Why, you were a little drummer boy when you left us, and now you're a gigantic sergeant!

*Serg.* Yes, I've risen in the service.

*Peter.* And some day, I suppose, you'll be an officer?

*Serg.* Yes—but that will be a long time first.

*Pipette.* Oh!

*All.* Well?

*Pipette.* Oh, if you please, I was thinking, if you're six foot long as a sergeant, how long will you be before you're a captain? Oh, if you please, I didn't mean that! Oh, my! I wish I hadn't spoken.

*Martha.* Pipette, you're a goose. (*To SERGEANT.*) But we're very glad to see you, and I hope you'll make the Three Pigeons your home as long as your furlough lasts.

*Serg.* With pleasure, Martha. I've been roughing for the last six months, and it's no little treat to look forward to six weeks' holiday in a pretty inn, in a pretty village, with a pretty landlady to look after one's wants.

[*Puts his arm round her waist.*]

*Pipette.* Oh, if you please, aunt, perhaps your son would like to see his room.

*Martha.* My son?

*Pipette.* Your nephew, then?

*Martha.* My nephew?

*Pipette.* Oh, if you please, I thought he must be one or the other, as his Colonel is very strict, and only allows his soldiers to kiss their mothers or their aunts. Oh dear, I wish I hadn't said that! Oh my! what a dreadful thing to have said!

*Serg.* When a soldier is on furlough, discipline is relaxed. (*Kisses MARTHA.*) But why are you sighing?

*Martha.* I'm thinking of my old lady. She won't pay my rent, and she's eaten nothing and drunk nothing for a fortnight, and she looks as plump as ever! (*Mysteriously.*) She's a fairy!

*Peter.* Bah!

*Martha.* Eh?

*Peter.* Stuff! I don't believe it.

*Martha.* And why?

*Peter.* Fairies do everything with a wand, don't they?

*Martha.* Well?

*Peter.* Well, she cleans her teeth with a toothbrush, I've seen her.

*Martha.* Peter, you're a goosó!

*Pipette.* I say, Peter.

*Peter.* Well?

*Pipette.* It'll be a bad look-out for you and me about Michaelmas!

*Serg.* Suppose we tackle the old lady by turns.

*Martha.* Ah, but who'll begin?

*Peter (boldly).* I will.

*All.* You.

*Peter.* I. She's no more a fairy than I am—she's an ugly old woman, and I'd rather tackle one ugly old woman than a dozen handsome men. Afraid of an old woman! Why, the older they are the less I fear 'em!

*Exeunt* PIPETTE, MARTHA, and SERGEANT, to house, R.

*Enter* OLD LADY, C.

*Peter.* Now for it. I say, old lady!

*O. Lady.* Well, young man?

*Peter.* I've a bone to pick with you.

*O. Lady.* Can't stop, my time's valuable.

*Peter.* Oh, but you must!

*O. Lady.* Must, eh?

*Peter.* Do you see that? (*Showing his arm.*) Feel it.

*O. Lady.* Mercy, what a ridiculous little arm!

*Peter (pointing to biceps).* Do you know what that is?

*O. Lady.* Well, I can guess!

*Peter.* What is it?

*O. Lady.* I suppose it's the bone you're going to pick with me. We may spare ourselves the trouble—there's very little on it.

*Peter (in a rage).* I say, I'm not accustomed to stand that sort of thing from a woman of your age, you know.

*O. Lady.* Do you know my age?

*Peter.* About eighty, I should say. (*Aside.*) That'll put her back up!

*O. Lady.* Eighty! Nonsense, I'm eight hundred and forty-two.

*Peter.* Well, you don't look it.

*O. Lady.* Peter, you're a dangerous little man!

*Peter.* I am a dangerous little man as you'll discover. Now, look here, ma'am.

*O. Lady.* I'm all attention, Peter!

*Peter.* You've been here six weeks.

*O. Lady.* True.

*Peter.* You've paid no rent.

*O. Lady.* None.

*Peter.* You don't mean to pay any.

*O. Lady.* Not a penny.

*Peter.* You don't eat anything.

*O. Lady.* Nothing.

*Peter.* You don't drink anything.

*O. Lady.* Not a drop.

*Peter.* And if you did you wouldn't pay for it.

*O. Lady.* Not a penny.

*Peter.* Now hasn't it occurred to you that on the whole you're not a profitable customer?

*O. Lady.* Yes, that reflection has occurred to me. But look at it from my point of view. If you could get all you wanted from a first-rate inn without paying for it, how long would you stop there?

*Peter.* I should stop there until somebody did to me what I'm going to do to you.

*O. Lady.* What's that?

*Peter.* Turn you out. Come—toddle—trundle—vanish!

[*He squares up to her as if about to strike her.*]

*O. Lady.* Why, Peter, would you strike an old woman?

*Peter.* Why not? you're as big as I am. Besides you've less to lose. You are very ugly, and no amount of thrashing would make you uglier than you are. Now I am very beautiful, and a tap on the nose would play the very deuce with me! Come—toddle!

[*Squares up at her.*]

*O. Lady.* Very well, Peter, you're a coward to square up at an old woman, and as a punishment you will be so good as to go on squaring up to every one you meet and telling them to "Come on!" until further notice.

*Peter.* What, squaring up like this? (*Squaring.*) Come on!

*O. Lady.* Yes, just like that.

*Peter.* What, at everybody I come across? (*Squaring.*) Come on!

*O. Lady.* Yes, at everybody you come across.

*Peter.* Big and little! (*Squaring.*) Come on!

*O. Lady.* Yes, big and little.

*Peter (howling).* But they won't like it! (*Squaring.*) Come on!



*O. Lady.* Not a bit.

*Peter.* They'll hit me back! Come on!

*O. Lady.* I hope so.

*Peter (squaring very fiercely and hitting out right and left, and howling all the time).* Oh, please don't make me go on squaring at every one like this. Come on!

*O. Lady.* Must be done, Peter!

*Peter.* But here's the sergeant coming. Must I square up to him? He's six feet high. Come on!

*O. Lady.* That's unlucky; but it must be done.

*Peter.* I think I'll go. Come on!

*O. Lady.* I think you'd better.

[*PETER goes off, squaring, hitting out violently, and crying out, "Come on!"*]

*Enter SERGEANT, from inn, and stares at him in astonishment.*

*Serg.* Is the young man unwell?

*O. Lady.* No, he's quite well. He's practising his boxing.

*Serg.* What for?

*O. Lady.* He says you flirt with Pipette, and he's going to give you a thrashing.

*Serg.* Ho, ho, ho! Now, my dear little old lady, I'm going to beg a favour of you.

*O. Lady.* Go away, soldier chap, I hate soldier chaps! Do you know what effect a red coat has on me? It drives me mad.

*Serg.* You're not the only lady it affects in that way. I've brought you a message from Mistress Martha. She wants you to go.

*O. Lady.* Go?

*Serg.* Go! Come, old lady (*puts his arm round her waist*), be reasonable.

*O. Lady.* Go away, soldier! I hate soldiers. Go away!

[*Strikes at him with her crutch.*]  
*Serg.* I say—gently, old lady! [*Ducking to avoid crutch.*]

*O. Lady.* Go away, I say! You're a dissipated fellow to dare to put your arms round an unprotected woman's waist! You wouldn't do it if my papa were here!

[*Thrashes him with crutch.*]  
*Serg.* Confound it, ma'am; your stick hurts! (*Ducking.*) Don't, ma'am, don't! (*Ducks.*) Don't, I say! [*Ducks.*]

*O. Lady.* And as a punishment for your impertinence, you will be so good as to go on ducking and dodging, and saying "Don't!" to every one you meet, until further notice.

*Serg.* What, like this? (*Ducking.*) Don't!

*O. Lady.* Yes, like that.

*Serg.* But they'll think I'm afraid of 'em! (*Ducking.*) Don't!

*O. Lady.* Sure to!

*Serg.* But I'm not afraid of any one! Don't!

*O. Lady.* No, you are the bravest man in the army!

*Serg.* I shall lose my reputation! I shall be branded as a coward! Don't!

*Enter PIPETTE from inn; she stares at SERGEANT in astonishment.*

*Pipette.* Oh, if you please, Mistress Martha's compliments, and have you been successful?

*Serg.* No, she won't go! (*Ducking.*) Don't!

*Pipette.* I wasn't going to. Oh! if you please, what's the matter?

*Serg.* Oh, it's nothing! it'll pass off. (*Ducking.*) Don't!

*Pipette.* Wouldn't you like to lie down? I'm not going to hurt you.

*Serg.* No, no, my dear, I'm quite well. (*Ducking.*) Don't! don't!

*Pipette.* It's your fun, I suppose?

*Serg.* Exactly. It's my fun!

[*Ducking.*

*O. Lady.* He's showing you how he fought the enemy at Johannesburg.

*Serg.* No, my dear! I'm showing you how the enemy fought us. This is the way they retreated. Don't! don't! don't!

[*Exit SERGEANT, ducking and backing.*

*Pipette.* What a strange young man!

*O. Lady.* He's a very rude young man.

*Pipette.* Rude?

*O. Lady.* Yes. He put his arm round my waist.

*Pipette.* Are you his mother?

*O. Lady.* No, my dear, I'm not.

*Pipette.* Nor his aunt?

*O. Lady.* No.

*Pipette.* Then I'll tell his Colonel, and he'll be flogged!

*O. Lady.* I should like to see him flogged.

*Pipette.* So should I! Oh my, what am I saying? Oh, dear, I didn't mean that!

*O. Lady.* Well, my dear, and what do you want?

*Pipette.* I want to ask you a great—great favour.

*O. Lady.* Yes?

*Pipette.* You're such a dear old lady, that I'm sure you'll grant it.

*O. Lady.* Yes, I'm a pleasant old person.

*Pipette.* Although you're past your prime, you've such bright eyes, and such red cheeks, and such a happy expression of countenance, that you're prettier than many a young girl I know.

*O. Lady.* Yes, I'm attractive—attractive, nothing more.

*Pipette.* Well, you're such a dear old lady, and I'm so fond of you, and you've made yourself so pleasant and so agreeable, that what I want you to do is to—is to——

*O. Lady.* Yes, is to—is to ?

*Pipette.* Is to go.

*O. Lady.* Go ?

*Pipette.* Go. You see, they don't appreciate you as much as I do. I think you're a dear old lady—perhaps the dearest old lady I ever saw, but they don't.

*O. Lady.* Oh, they don't ?

*Pipette.* No, I can't understand it, but it is so. Now, I'm sure you're too proud—too noble—too high-spirited to remain where you're not wanted. Aren't you, you dear—dear old lady ? (*Kisses her.*) Oh, I declare I could kiss those cherry cheeks all day long !

*O. Lady.* All day long ?

*Pipette.* All day long ! [*Kisses her.*]

*O. Lady.* Very good—you're telling stories, my dear, and must be punished. As a punishment you will be so good as to go about offering to kiss and fondle every one you meet, until further notice.

*Pipette.* What, like that ? (*Makes kissing noise.*) Kiss me !

*O. Lady.* Yes, like that !

*Pipette.* But people will think it so odd. Kiss me !

*O. Lady.* Yes, they'll be surprised at first.

*Pipette.* But I say—gentlemen and all ? Kiss me !

*O. Lady.* Yes, gentlemen and all.

*Pipette.* But they won't like it !

*O. Lady.* Oh no, they won't mind it.

*Pipette.* But I'm so shy ! I can't look at a gentleman without blushing. Kiss me !

*O. Lady.* Oh, you'll get over your shyness after a year or two of that sort of thing.

*Pipette.* Kiss me ! Oh dear, oh dear, I don't know what people will say ! Kiss me !

*O. Lady.* I do. They'll say you quiet ones are always the  
And so you are.

*Enter BOOMBLEHARDT from inn.*

*Pipette.* Oh dear, here's that disgusting old wretch, Boomblerhardt. I hate the sight of him! (*To BOOMBLEHARDT.*) Kiss me.

*Boom.* Certainly, my dear. [*Kisses her.*]

*Pipette.* How dare you take such a liberty! You insolent old man! Kiss me.

*Boom.* Again! Why, of course. [*Kisses her.*]

*Pipette.* Oh, you disgusting old man! (*Boxes his ears.*) I'll tell my aunt, and she'll turn you out of doors, and you shall be hooted through the village. Kiss me.

*Boom.* (*puzzled*). Thank you—no more this morning.

*Pipette.* Thank you, I'm sure! Oh dear, oh dear! What shall I do? [*Exit crying into house.*]

*Boom.* What a very strange girl.

*O. Lady.* (*seated*). I am a very strange girl.

*Boom.* Ah—I was not referring to you. But I want a word with you. I want to make a bargain with you.

*O. Lady.* Well, get on.

*Boom.* Well, Mistress Martha has sent me to induce you to go; but I don't want to do anything of the kind. I want you to stay. So if you'll fall in with my views, I'll do all I can to prevent their turning you out.

*O. Lady.* Well, what are your views?

*Boom.* You have the wonderful gift of living without food.

*O. Lady.* Yes—I have that gift.

*Boom.* For the last fifty years I've been trying to master that wonderful secret, but in vain. It's true I've brought myself down to one hard-boiled egg and a tea-cup full of soup *per diem*, but I find even that a great drain on my resources. Now, if you'll teach me how to live comfortably—I don't say luxuriously, but comfortably—on nothing at all, I'll give you—yes, I'll give you a guinea!

*O. Lady.* You'll give me a guinea?

*Boom.* Yes—half down and half by a bill at six months. Well, come—say a guinea down. There, look at it! A whole guinea! Weigh it! Taste it! Look at the milling. Oh, it's a beautiful guinea! [*She takes it and tests it.*]

*O. Lady.* You're a very mean old man, and you must be punished for it. You'll have the goodness to go on offering guineas from your long bag to every one you meet until further notice.

*Boom.* What, like this—Allow me to offer you a guinea?

*O. Lady.* Thank you. (*Takes it.*) Yes, like that.

*Boom.* To every one I meet?

*O. Lady.* Yes, to every one you meet.

*Boom.* Allow me to offer you a guinea!

*O. Lady.* With pleasure, Mr. Boombledhardt. [Takes it.

*Boom.* (in dismay). But people who don't know me will think I'm making them a present!

*O. Lady.* No doubt of it.

*Boom.* But I never made a present in my life!

*O. Lady.* Then it's high time you began. [Going.

*Boom.* Are you going?

*O. Lady.* Yes, I have some charms to work.

*Boom.* I don't see them. Allow me to offer you a guinea.

*O. Lady.* Thank you—don't go that way or you'll meet Peter. Now to have a word or two with Mistress Martha.

[Exit into inn.

*Boom.* Here's a pretty state of things! Ruin stares me in the face!

*Enter SERGEANT.*

*Serg.* I must see the old lady—I can't stand this any longer. (Sees BOOMBLEHARDT and begins to duck and back.) Don't! Don't!

*Boom.* Allow me, sir, to offer you a guinea.

*Serg.* You're very good, but—Don't, don't!

*Boom.* I can't help it—I must! An irresistible impulse compels me to keep on going like this. Allow me to offer you a guinea.

*Serg.* (taking it). Please understand that when I say don't, I don't mean don't; I say don't because an irresistible impulse compels me to say don't! don't! don't!

*Boom.* Don't be frightened, young man, I am not going to hurt you.

*Serg.* Don't! don't!

*Boom.* Not for worlds.

*Serg.* I tell you I say "don't," in compliance with an irresistible impulse. It's a spell.

*Boom.* Dear me, this is extremely curious. (Sitting and examining SERGEANT critically through eye-glass, as he bobs and ducks all over the stage.) A purely reflex action of the muscles of the neck and shoulders. Allow me to offer you a guinea.

*Serg.* Don't, don't! I wish you'd go.

*Boom.* My dear sir, I may as well hand my guineas to you as to anybody else; and you amuse me very much, you make me laugh. Ha! ha!

*Serg.* Hang the fellow, how shall I get rid of him? Stop, here's Pipette—I have it! I'll back from Pipette on to him!

*Enter PIPETTE from house, SERGEANT turns to her and backs from her on to BOOMBLEHARDT'S toes.*

*Boom.* Here, I say, sir, look where you're coming to!

[SERGEANT backs him off the stage.

*Serg.* Thank heaven he's gone at last!

*Pipette* (to SERGEANT). Kiss me!

*Serg.* Eh? (*Ducking*). Don't!

*Pipette.* I can't help it. Kiss me!

*Serg.* Don't! don't!

*Pipette.* Don't be angry, sergeant, but it's an irresistible impulse. Kiss me!

*Serg.* I'm not angry—I like it. Don't, don't!

*Enter PETER, squaring.*

*Peter.* Hallo, Jenny, kissing Sergeant Klooque! Come on!

*Pipette.* Please, Peter, I can't help it. It's an irresistible impulse. Kiss me! (to PETER).

*Peter.* Come on! Come on! [*Squaring—he squares at SERGEANT who ducks.*

*Pipette.* Oh dear, oh dear, they're going to fight about me. My character will be gone in no time!

*Peter.* Come on! Come on!

*Serg.* Don't, don't!

*Peter.* Please don't be angry, sergeant, but I'm compelled to hit you. I am acting under an irresistible impulse.

*Serg.* And don't you suppose I'm ducking and dodging because I'm afraid of you. I, too, am acting under an irresistible impulse.

*Enter BOOMBLEHARDT.*

*Boom.* (to SERGEANT). Allow me to offer you a guinea.

*Serg.* Sir, I have great pleasure in taking it.

[PETER hits BOOMBLEHARDT on the back.

*Boom.* (to PETER). Allow me to offer you a guinea.

*Peter.* A guinea? Thank you! Come on!

*Boom.* (to PIPETTE). Pipette, allow me to offer you a guinea.

*Pipette.* You're a disreputable old scamp! Kiss me, kiss me!

*Enter MARTHA and VILLAGERS from inn.*

*Martha (to VILLAGERS, pushing them all away).* Go away! go away! Get out of this—get out of this!

*Serg. (ducking).* Why, Martha, what's the matter?

*Martha.* Don't be frightened, Sergeant—I don't mean it. I tried with my three servants just now to make the old lady go, and she compels us to turn everybody out of my inn until further notice! Why I shall be ruined! Go away—get out of this! [*To one and all in succession.*]

*Boom.* Allow me, ma'am, to offer you a guinea.

*Martha.* Certainly; thank you—go away.

*Boom.* Another.

*Martha.* Thank you—go away. (*To the others.*) Go away—get out of this—go away.

*Pipette (to SERGEANT).* Kiss me, kiss me!

*Peter (to SERGEANT).* Come on, come on!

*Serg.* Don't, don't, don't!

*Martha.* Go away! go away—get out of this—go away!

*Boom.* Allow me to offer you a guinea. [*To all in succession.*]

*Enter OLD LADY from inn—they all rush to her.*

*Martha (pushing her).* Go away—go away!

*Villagers.* Get out of this—go away!

*Peter.* Come on, come on!

*Serg. (apart from the others).* Don't, don't!

*Pipette.* Kiss me! kiss me! [*Trying to kiss OLD LADY.*]

*Boom.* Allow me to offer you a guinea.

[*They hustle her about the stage.*]

*O. Lady.* Stop! stop! stop! (*They all desist.*) I release you all. (*All relapse.*) I can manage you separately, but altogether you're too many for me! The spell is removed!

*Martha.* Then you'll go?

*O. Lady (sulkily).* Yes—I'll go.

*Pipette (to SERGEANT).* Then you're not a coward?

*Serg.* A coward? No! And you don't want to kiss everybody?

*Pipette.* Kiss everybody? No! (*To PETER.*) And you're not a brave man?

*Peter.* A brave man? No! (*To MARTHA.*) And you don't want to turn everybody out of your inn?

*Martha.* Out of my inn? No! (*To BOOMBLEHARDT.*) And you don't want to give everybody a guinea?

*Boom.* Give everybody a guinea? No; I'll be hanged if I do!

•  
*Fintle.*

*All.* Go away, ma'am, go away, ma'am,  
Go away, ma'am, good day !

*O. Lady.*

Defeated  
And ill-treated,  
I'm vindictive as you'll find,  
So prepare you,  
For to spare you

*All.*

I am not at all inclined !  
Go away ma'am, &c.

[*They hustle her out of the gate.*

CURTAIN.





# RANDALL'S THUMB.

*AN ORIGINAL COMEDY*

IN THREE ACTS.

*First performed at the Opening of the Royal Court Theatre, under the  
management of Miss M Litton, 25th January, 1871.*

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DR. TROTWAY ... ..	MR. H. MELLON.
JOE BANGLES ... ..	MR. EDWARD RIGHTON
RANDALL, <i>an Adventurer</i> ... ..	MR. W. BELFORD
BUCKTHORPE, <i>under his thumb</i> ...	MR. HERMANN VEZIN
MR. SCANTLEBURY, <i>on his honeymoon</i>	MR. FRANK MATTHEWS.
MR. FLAMBOYS, <i>an old Stager</i> ...	MR. ASTLEY.
CUMMING, <i>a Waiter</i> ... ..	MR. PARRY
CLENCH, <i>a Superintendent of Police</i> ...	MR. JARVIS
EDITH TEMPLE, <i>Dr. Trotway's Niece</i>	MISS KATE BISHOP
MRS. SCANTLEBURY ... ..	MRS. STEPHENS.
MISS SPINN ... ..	MISS MAGGIE BRENNAN.
MRS. FLAMBOYS ... ..	MISS ELEANOR BUFTON.

### ACT I.

#### GARDENS OF BEACHINGTON HOTEL.

### ACT II.

#### THE OLUMP ROCKS.

### ACT III.

#### GARDENS OF BEACHINGTON HOTEL.

Scenery by Mr. BRINEWOOD POTTS and Assistants.

*Modern Seaside Dresses. Randall's dress rather seedy and  
pretentious.*

Time in Representation : Two Hours and a Half.

# RANDALL'S THUMB.

## ACT I.

SCENE.—*Gardens of Beachington Hotel. Entrance to hotel, R.; garden table and two chairs, R.; table and chair, L.; gong at entrance to hotel; visitors' book on R. table; entrance to hotel garden, C.; sea view.*

MR. and MRS. FLAMBOYS *discovered sitting at table, R., but apart as if they had quarrelled—enter MR. BANGLES, from hotel.*

*Bangles.* Ha, Flamboys! How d'ye do, Mrs. Flamboys? (*Aside.*) Hallo, another row! It's a most extraordinary thing that these young people should quarrel as they do. Flamboys is a capital fellow. Mrs. Flamboys is a pretty and agreeable woman. And they don't speak half-a-dozen words a day.

*Flamboys (yawning).* Oh dear! oh dear! It's awfully slow here! I say, Bangles, don't you find it awfully slow?

*Bang.* Slow? No!

*Flamb.* Ah, you're a single man, that makes all the difference at a watering place.

*Bang.* It does make a difference, no doubt, but it seems to me that the advantage is all on your side. (*Bowing to Mrs. FLAMBOYS.*)

*Flamb.* Unsophisticated soul! May that fond delusion never be disturbed. You're a bachelor—take an old stager's advice and keep so.

[*Mrs. FLAMBOYS rises, in a huff, and retires up.*

*Bang. (crossing to FLAMBOYS).* My boy, I don't like to hear any man talk like that. It's excusable in a half-fledged griff, with a pocket full of dangerous money and a body full of dangerous tastes, but a married man who speaks as you speak is a traitor to his order. You've taken the shilling—stick to

your colours like a man—and don't damn the service because you don't happen to hit it off with your commanding officer.

*Flamb.* My dear fellow, who *does* hit it off with his commanding officer?

*Bang.* Bosh! That's the foolish fast sham-cynical cant of the day. I've heard many a youngster speak as you speak, and I've lived long enough to see nearly all of them happy husbands and happy fathers. 'Those who stick to the professions of their youth are those whom no decent woman would have.

*Mrs. Flamboys.* But it seems strange that so ardent an advocate of married life should have lived single so long.

*Bang.* It's no fault of mine, Mrs. Flamboys—I should have been married thirty years ago, if I'd had my way—to a lady twenty years older than myself! Perhaps it's as well that I didn't.

*Flamb.* Quite, I'm sure.

*Bang.* But I've turned the corner some time now, and I'm going down-hill pretty quickly, and I—I often wish, Mrs. Flamboys, that I had some one to put the skid on for me, and let me down easily. An old man feels the want of a wife more than a young one does, depend upon that. It's no joke to look forward to a solitary old age with death in apartments at the end of it; and the only symptom of regret, the demand made by your landlady on your executors for compensation on account of the house having got an ill name from your having died in it.

*Flamb.* Well, if an old stager's example can be of any service in inducing you to come to a practical conclusion on the subject, you're quite welcome to it! How long do you propose to stay at Beachington?

*Bang.* Stay? All the autumn—all the winter, perhaps. It's a delightful place. By Jove, sir, it suits me down to the ground. When I see a face I like, I want to speak to it; and at Beachington one can do that without fear of a snub. I've lived in London for the last three months, and I haven't made three acquaintances. I have been here three weeks and I've made thirty. I like most faces. By Jove, I like yours—though you do talk infernal nonsense.

[*Shaking hands with FLAMBOYS.*]

*Mrs. F. (seated).* Strange taste!

*Bang.* And I like your wife's.

*Flamb.* You're easily satisfied.

*Bang.* I don't dislike Scantlebury's face.

*Mrs. F.* And Mrs. Scantlebury's?

*Bang.* Well—yes, and Mrs. Scantlebury's.

*Mrs. F.* Take care, Mr. Bangles—she's a bride!

*Bang.* Oh, don't misunderstand me—it's purely æsthetic—purely æsthetic. I admire Mrs. Scantlebury as I admire a painting.

*Mrs. F.* Oh, I see! If you look upon Mrs. Scantlebury as a work of art, I admit that there is some ground for your admiration.

*Bang.* Ha, ha! you're severe on the bride, Mrs. Flamboys—but I say—how does she do it?

*Mrs. F.* Indeed I don't know—you had better ask Mr. Scantlebury.

*Flamb.* Oh, he doesn't know. He's not been married long enough. Husbands learn these things slowly and by degrees. Mr. Scantlebury has only been married a fortnight, and I suppose that at the present moment he's at that stage of discovery which takes the form of a puzzled wonder why the deuce his wife will keep her dressing case locked. He'll find out all about it some day. At least I did.

*Mrs. F.* Mr. Flamboys! How dare you say such a thing?

*Flamb.* Well, and whom else do you admire? There's Trotway.

*Bang.* Oh, Jack Trotway, of course. Why, Jack Trotway is the oldest and dearest friend I have in the world. We were at school together—walked Guy's together—entered the Service together as Assistant Surgeons—left it together as Inspectors of Hospitals.

*Flamb.* And Miss Temple, his niece?

*Bang.* Edith Temple! Yes, yes! God bless her—I like Edith Temple's face. Oh yes, I like Edith's face.

*Mrs. F.* Well, then there's Miss Spinn.

*Bang.* Well, and I like—no, hang it, I do *not* like Miss Spinn.

[*Takes stage, r.*]

*Mrs. F.* But that's very ungrateful, Mr. Bangles, for I'm sure she likes you. Why you are always together!

*Bang.* Always together, ma'am? We are Siamese twins in everything but physical union! If we were physically united, a surgical operation might separate us; as it is, I'm not aware of any operation—surgical or otherwise—that will keep us asunder. That woman's the pest of my life.

*Flamb.* I wonder you stand it.

*Bang.* Stand it? Confound it, you don't want me to strangle the woman, do you?

*Flamb.* No, that would be an extreme measure. I shouldn't try that until all other means had failed.

*Bang.* All other means *have* failed. Sir, the woman is too

old a hand. She comes to attack me armed with an experience which I suppose is utterly unexampled. What is a simple-minded Indian to do with a woman who in her time has been a governess, a lady's companion, a Crimean nurse, a columbine, a missionary, a vivandière, a stewardess, and a Bloomer?

*Enter MISS SPINN from hotel.*

*Miss S.* Talking about me, Mr. Bangles, as usual? (*Aside to BANGLES.*) Oh, you indiscreet man!

*Bang.* Yes, ma'am I have been talking about you. I'm not aware there are any secrets between us.

*Miss S. (aside to BANGLES).* Very judiciously passed off. (*Aloud.*) Secrets? Certainly not. I haven't a secret in the world! Yes, Mrs. Flamboys, in my time, I've been everything, by turns—

*Flamb.* Except a wife.

*Miss S.* And nothing long.

*Bang.* Except a spinster.

*Mrs. F. (mischievously).* Do you know, Miss Spinn, I often wonder that, with your love of change, it has never entered your head to get married? Mr. Bangles was just saying so as you came in!

*Bang.* I, ma'am? Hang it, Mrs. Flamboys—

*Miss S.* Dear Joe! (*Aside to BANGLES.*) Oh, you imprudent boy! (*Aloud.*) Mrs. Flamboys, I will tell you a secret. (*Confidentially.*) It has entered my head to get married!

[*Exit BANGLES, unperceived.*]

*Mrs. F.* Impossible!

*Miss S.* But true. Over and over again I have said to myself, "It is my duty to marry." But whom? There's my difficulty.

*Flamb.* Yes—I see your difficulty.

*Miss S.* He must be a good man—he must be a rich man—he must be a man of exquisite taste, and his admiration for me must be unbounded. Now, it isn't easy to find this combination of qualities in one individual.

*Flamb.* That I can quite understand.

*Miss S.* Exactly. Above all, he must be furiously jealous in order to—to—

*Mrs. F.* To curb your love of change?

*Miss S.* Exactly. When I find such a man, I will throw myself into his arms and I will say, "Take me, and be happy!"

*Mrs. F.* But, would not that be rather abrupt?

*Miss S.* What, the remark? Oh, of course, as I put it; but I am assuming that he has led up to it.

*Flamb.* But that's begging the question.

*Miss S.* Oh, but that's often done.

*Flamb.* I believe it is. It was in my case.

*Mrs. F.* Mr. Flamboys!

*Flamb.* Ah!

[*Sighs.*]

*Mrs. F.* Ah! (*Sighs.*) Brute!

*Miss S.* Um! Pleasant people, these. (*Aloud.*) But, Mr. Bangles—where's Mr. Bangles?

*Flamb.* Gone.

*Miss S.* Gone? Why, do you know, I came here on purpose to find him?

*Flamb.* No!

*Miss S.* I did, indeed. I'm organising a pic-nic to the Clump Rocks this day week, and I want Mr. Bangles to help me.

*Mrs. F.* Well, Miss Spinn, Mr. Bangles went off very quietly, directly you came.

*Miss S.* Very quietly?

*Mrs. F.* Very.

*Miss S.* As if he didn't want to be observed?

*Flamb.* Exactly.

*Miss S.* Sly old gentleman—he meant me to follow him. Silly fellow; as if there's anything to be ashamed of in our liking each other's society. But these Indians are so sly. Which way did he go? Into the grove? Thank you. Good morning.

*Exit Miss SPINN—MR. and MRS. FLAMBOYS rush to each other's arms.*

*Flamb.* My darling—now, at last, we are alone! [*Kisses her.*]

*Re-enter Miss SPINN—they disengage.*

*Miss S.* I beg your pardon—I forgot to ask if I might put your name down?

*Flamb.* Oh, certainly.

*Miss S.* And Mrs. Flamboys?

*Flamb. (brusquely).* Oh, she doesn't want to go. She's got nothing to go in. Besides, a pic-nic is no fun, when one's wife's there.

*Mrs. F.* Indeed, but I shall go, if I have to wear my alpaca. Put me down, if you please, Miss Spinn, as well as Mr. Flamboys. (*To FLAMBOYS.*) Brute!

*Miss S.* That's right. It will be delightful if we have a fine day. Now for Mr. Bangles. [*Exit Miss SPINN.*]

*Mrs. F.* There now—she saw you kiss me! It'll be all over the hotel!



*Flamb.* But, my darling pet, you are my wife!

*Mrs. F.* Certainly, dear. But husbands don't avail themselves of every opportunity of kissing their wives after they have been married five years. It's all very well at first, but people cool down.

*Flamb.* Ah, it's so difficult to remember the dreary fiction that we've been married five years, in face of the delightful fact that we've only been married three weeks.

*Mrs. F.* But you must try, my pet, you must indeed. Only think, if it should be known in the hotel that we are on our honeymoon tour! Why we shouldn't have a moment's peace!

*Flamb.* It would be extremely awkward. Well, I've done all I can. I've quarrelled with you over and over again in public. I've worn the oldest boots I could find. I've flirted with every woman I've come across. I've constantly referred to our numerous family, and I've never lost an opportunity of eating sake and onions.

*Mrs. F.* My pet, how good of you! (*Kissing him.*) Our numerous family!

*Flamb.* Yes—four!

*Both.* Ha, ha!

*Mrs. F.* Now, mind—I insist on your being extremely rude to me on all public occasions. You must say the unkindest things about my dress, and my complexion, and my hair—and you must snub me whenever you've an opportunity.

*Flamb.* My love, I'll be a perfect brute!

*Mrs. F.* I'm sure you will. Think how much annoyance and observation we save ourselves by such a course. Look at those two ridiculous old donkeys, the Scantleburys, who are always advertising the fact that they are honeymooning, although she's sixty, if she's a day! Look at them, with their arms round each other's waists, as if they were two-and-twenty! It's positively indelicate!

*Flamb.* Ah! there are no fools like old ones!

*Enter MR. and MRS. SCANTLEBURY, fondling.*

*Scant.* Now, my darling, I must insist on your wearing a shawl—it's too cold to be out without one. Ah, Mrs. Flamboys! assist me in persuading Frederica that she will certainly catch cold, if she doesn't wrap herself up.

*Mrs. F. (seated).* Oh! I couldn't presume to dictate to a lady of Mrs. Scantlebury's age! Besides, it is not a cold day.

*Flamb.* Not cold?—it's freezing! Mr. Scantlebury is quite right! It's all very well for you to go about as you do—

you're a mere girl! But when you're Mrs. Scantlebury's age you'll know better, won't she, Scantlebury?

*Scant.* (*aside*). These persons are very insufferable!

*Mrs. F.* And when Mr. Scantlebury has been married as long as we have, he will only trouble himself about one circumstance connected with Mrs. Scantlebury's toilette.

*Scant.* And that is——?

*Mrs. F.* That it is regulated with a due regard to economy. Such, at least, is my experience. [*Looking savagely at FLAMBOYS.*]

*Flam.* There you are—at it again! Nag—nag—nag—all day long!

*Mrs. F.* Then you should give me something fit to wear! Will you believe me, Mrs. Scantlebury, when I tell you that he hasn't give me a single dress since my marriage? I am positively wearing out my *trousseau* at this moment!

*Scant.* Oh, Flamboys! I'm ashamed of you!

*Mrs. Scant.* Oh, Mr. Flamboys, we're ashamed of you!

*Flam.* Ah! wait till you've been married five years! You are young at it just now, and you're carried away by enthusiasm. It's astonishing how that sort of thing dies out!

*Mrs. Scant.* Horace, assure me that this sort of thing will not die out. Tell me that you will always—always—always—love me as you do now!

*Scant.* Frederica, do you doubt me?

*Mrs. Scant.* No—I cannot doubt those eyes! [*Gazing at him.*]

*Scant.* My own!

*Mrs. Scant.* My love!

*Flam.* (*aside*). Old fools! (*Aloud.*) Ah! when I married, Scantlebury, I believed in all that.

*Mrs. F.* So did I—but I have been bitterly undeceived! Oh, Mrs. Scantlebury! it is a pleasant thing to dream that the honeymoon is to last for life!—but it is a terrible thing to awake and find that you have married an icicle!

[*Weeps.*]

*Mrs. Scant.* Horace, is it possible that you are an icicle in disguise?

*Scant.* If I were, what would become of me before the blaze of those radiant eyes?

*Mrs. Scant.* Go, flatterer.

*Scant.* My own!

*Mrs. Scant.* My love!

*Flam.* Oh, this is intolerable!

*Scant.* Mr. Flamboys, you must excuse us if we are a little effusive. This is the most interesting period of our existence. I dare say now that, under similar circumstances, you went on just as we do now?

*Flamb.* I dare say; but really, it's so long ago that I hardly remember. I've no doubt we made ourselves excessively ridiculous. Newly-married people always do. [*Lighting cigar.*]

*Mrs. Scant.* Mrs. Flamboys, do you allow Mr. Flamboys to smoke?

*Mrs. F.* Oh, he can do as he likes!

*Mrs. Scant.* Mr. Scantlebury never smokes.

*Mrs. F.* Nor did Mr. Flamboys under Mr. Scantlebury's interesting circumstances. But all that is changed now!

[*Exit Mr. and Mrs. FLAMBOYS, unobserved by the SCANTLEBURYS.*]

*Mrs. Scant.* Horace, is it possible that the time will ever come when you will be so indifferent to my wishes as to degenerate into a highly-flavoured smoker?

*Scant.* Frederica, the man who, in pursuance of any selfish indulgence, would fly in the face of his wife's expressed wishes, I hold to be no better than a—— (*Looking round, and changing his tone.*) Oh! we are alone. [*Lights a cigar.*]

*Mrs. Scant.* Eh? Oh! Now, Mr. Scantlebury, did you hear what that man said? Did you hear him say that I was making myself excessively ridiculous?

*Scant.* Yes, I heard that.

*Mrs. Scant.* And are you going to permit that young man to insult me with impunity?

*Scant.* What do you propose that I should do to that young man?

*Mrs. Scant.* I ask you—is such a remark to pass unchallenged?

*Scant.* Oh, I've no objection to challenge the remark. But really, considering that this is our thirty-fifth wedding-day——

*Mrs. Scant.* Mr. Scantlebury! I believe we agreed that the first thirty-four were to go for nothing.

*Scant.* Go for nothing! Have I passed through thirty-four years of married life with you to be told that I am to consider that they have gone for nothing?

*Mrs. Scant.* Certainly. I am a bride; you are a bridegroom. Why, bless my heart, one's nobody at Beachington if one isn't a bride!

*Scant.* Then am I nobody!

*Mrs. Scant.* Do you think that I should be the central attraction at Beachington if it were not supposed that I am newly married?

*Scant.* No.

*Mrs. Scant.* My attractions are fading.

*Scant.* They are.

*Mrs. Scant.* I am not so young as I was.

*Scant.* I don't agree with you there. You've been thirty-nine for the last twenty years.

*Mrs. Scant.* (*bitterly*). Ah—but you are my husband!

[*Crosses to L.*

*Scant.* I am convinced of it.

*Mrs. Scant.* And a very pretty husband you are!

*Scant.* Go, little flatterer!

*Mrs. Scant.* Now, once for all, Mr. Scantlebury, let us understand one another. I choose to be looked upon as a bride, for I cannot do without attention, and I will not do without attention. The doctor has prescribed it for me. Therefore, I prefer to have it supposed that we are a newly-married couple, and you will be good enough to give countenance to my scheme. And a very pretty countenance it is!

[*Exit MRS. SCANTLEBURY.*

*Scant.* Incredible as it may appear, that was a very pleasant woman—five-and-thirty years ago. So I'm a bridegroom again! I wish I was! Well, the fiction has its advantages. It makes Mrs. Scantlebury extremely pleasant in public—and I contrive to keep in public as much as I can. It's hard when it comes to dancing with Mrs. Scantlebury, as it did last night; but she doesn't dance long at a time.

[*Retires up.*

*Enter RANDALL, C., followed by CUMMING, a waiter, with very large seedy portmanteau and a new smart valise—then BUCKTHORPE, who sits on bench at the back of the stage.*

*Rand.* Very good; then take the large portmanteau to thirty-five.

*Cumming.* The one with very little in it, sir?

*Rand.* What the devil is it to you what's in it? Don't shake it about like that! Take it up-stairs, and carry it carefully. Mind, if the side comes out I hold you responsible. (*Exit CUMMING into hotel.*) What's this, the visitors' book? (*Opens and reads.*) "Mr. and Mrs. Flamboys, Scarborough; Miss Spinn, Hookham; Mr. and Mrs. Scantlebury on their"—ha, ha!—"on their honeymoon." (*Sees SCANTLEBURY.*) I beg your pardon.

*Scant.* I am Mr. Scantlebury, sir.

[*With dignity.*

*Rand.* Oh, indeed! On your honeymoon?

*Scant.* Yes, sir, on my honeymoon.

*Rand.* Ha, ha!

*Scant.* I see nothing to laugh at, sir?

*Rand.* Of course you don't—it's a devilish serious position for you. But don't you find it amuses your friends?

*Scant.* No, sir, I do not find that it amuses my friends.

*Rand.* They must be dull dogs.

*Scant.* I believe there is nothing to be ashamed of in the fact that I am on my honeymoon?

*Rand.* Nothing at all. Quite the reverse. It's very creditable to you at your time of life.

*Scant.* Society, sir, I believe, could not be carried on without honeymoons.

*Rand.* Quite out of the question. You're a martyr in a good cause.

*Scant. (aside).* This fellow is laughing at me. He shall see that I'm not to be trifled with. (*Crosses to R.—then aloud.*) Good morning, sir. [*Exit.*]

*Rand.* Ha, ha! (*Refers to book.*) "Joseph Bangles, M.D., late Bengal Army. Dr. Trotway and niece." Good. (*Aside.*) They are here.

*Buck. (coming down).* Well, now that you've brought me all the way down to Beachington, perhaps you'll let me know what you want with me.

*Rand.* I want you to help me to carry out a scheme by which I shall make a pot of money.

*Buck.* Suppose I refuse?

*Rand.* But you won't refuse; you can't help yourself. Do you remember the night of the 14th of August, 1869?

*Buck.* I'm not likely to forget it.

*Rand.* Probably not. We don't commit murders every day. At least, I don't.

*Buck.* It was no murder, and you know it. I was attacked by a stranger in the dark, at the edge of Banton Cliffe, and in self-defence I struck at him with a sword-stick.

*Rand.* You did. He fell over the cliff and was killed. At my suggestion you left England that night. The body was found, and your victim turned out to be a highly respectable commercial traveller named Peters, and a coroner's jury having the fact of the sword-thrust strongly before their eyes, returned a verdict of "Wilful Murder" against some person or persons unknown.

*Buck.* In the sight of heaven I am innocent.

*Rand.* No doubt. But in the sight of the law you are guilty. A reward of three hundred pounds is offered for your apprehension. I could earn that three hundred pounds this evening. I am extremely hard up. The letters you wrote to me from Dijon, identifying you with the man who caused his

death, are in my pocket, and the local police station is next door.

*Buck.* You know that I am innocent of any crime.

*Rand.* Stop. What do you understand by the word "crime"?

*Buck.* An offence against the law.

*Rand.* Childish! A crime is that unfortunate combination of circumstances which induces a jury to return a verdict of guilty. Believe me, I speak from experience. But don't be afraid. I don't intend to inform against you. I want you: you are very valuable to me.

*Buck.* You are very good.

*Rand.* Not at all.

*Buck.* Well, perhaps not.

*Rand.* I am sure not. Now for the work that I want you to do.

*Buck.* Disagreeable, I suppose?

*Rand.* Very. There's an extremely nice girl with thirty-eight thousand pounds, stopping in this hotel, and I want you to make love to her.

*Buck.* Why don't you do it yourself?

*Rand.* Do you think I should be successful?

*Buck.* (looking at him coolly). No. Why am I to do this?

*Rand.* To explain that, I must go back to the history of my marriage.

*Buck.* I thought you were a bachelor?

*Rand.* So do a good many others—but I'm not.

*Buck.* Heaven help your wife!

*Rand.* Heaven has. She is no more.

*Buck.* Was she pretty?

*Rand.* Very.

*Buck.* What did she die of?

*Rand.* Old age.

*Buck.* You said she was pretty?

*Rand.* She *was*—but that was long before I was born or thought of. I met her at Beachington three years ago—she was then seventy-nine. She was a very affectionate old lady; and, as I found that she had money, I proposed to her then and there, and then and there she accepted me. Within three days we were married.

*Buck.* Sharp work!

*Rand.* It *was* sharp. But when the bride is seventy-nine, time is of the essence of the contract. Two hours after the ceremony, the tranquil joys of my honeymoon were interrupted by the information that I was wanted for felony. I bolted.

*Buck.* With your wife?

*Rand.* No. She had many recommendations, but rapidity of movement was not one of them. She only felt herself equal to a Bath chair—under the circumstances, I preferred the limited mail. So we were separated—cause, incompatibility of locomotion. The old lady, ashamed, no doubt, of her husband, kept her marriage secret, and six weeks after she died of inanition. Well, her will was opened, and by it she left all her property—thirty-eight thousand pounds—to her niece. But as the will was dated six months before her marriage with me, it was to all intents and purposes a worthless document. That is the money that I want you to help me to recover.

*Buck.* But if your story is true, why don't you take legal proceedings to recover it?

*Rand.* Because, my child of nature, if I rely on the simple truth of my story—every word of which I am in a position to prove—the circumstances are so remarkable, that public attention will be directed to it, and the fact will come out that I am the unfortunate individual who, under another name, left this hotel for Liverpool five minutes before two detectives from Scotland Yard entered it in search of me. That contingency, my unsophisticated shepherd, you will understand I am anxious to avoid. So, my lamb, I want you to give out that the old lady and I were friends of some years' standing; but in order to do this, I must know something about her previous history—her friends—her way of living—her movements—and so forth—of which I happen to know nothing whatever. So I want you to establish a flirtation with this girl, in order that you may be able to extract from her such information on these points as shall enable me to concoct a rather less violent account of my marriage with her.

*Buck.* And if I refuse?

*Rand.* If you refuse, I shall have to content myself with three hundred pounds instead of thirty-eight thousand.

*Buck.* It's a dirty job!

*Rand.* Not at all. If my story is true, I am entitled to the money.

*Buck.* Yes—if it's true!

*Rand.* My simple lad, you can ascertain its truth by reference to the register of St. Jude's in this parish. After all, you are only helping me to my own. It's a roundabout way of doing it, but as it's a matter of life and death to you, you are not likely to be squeamish on that point. (*Aside.*) This must be Dr. Trotway.

*Enter DR. TROTWAY, through C. from L., smoking.*

(*Aloud.*) I'm going round to the post-office. I shall be back directly. Have you a "light? (*crossing to L.—taking out cigar case.*)

*Buck.* No. You know I don't smoke.

*Trot.* Allow me to offer you one. [*Offers lighted cigar.*

*Rand.* Thank you. Eh! Not Dr. Trotway?

*Trot.* Yes. Should I know you?

*Rand.* I had the pleasure of meeting you, many years ago, at your regimental mess in—in——

*Trot.* Kurrachee?

*Rand.* Kurrachee. You sat vice, I remember. Don't remember me, I dare say. No! I had no whiskers then. This is my old chum, Reggy Buckthorpe—late 24th. We shall meet at dinner, I dare say. Good morning!

[*Exit RANDALL through gate, C., and off, L.*

*Trot.* Don't know his face; don't want to. Friend seems a decent fellow. (*Aloud.*) 24th—eh—Mr. Buckthorpe? Knew them very well in the Punjaub; but that's before your time.

*Buck.* Yes, I joined in '62—left in '68.

*Trot.* Half-pay?

*Buck.* No. Sold out.

*Trot.* (*aside.*) Bad!

*Buck.* Hard up.

*Trot.* Good! Like a man who owns to that.

*Enter EDITH.*

*Edith.* Uncle, this pic-nic promises to be a great success.

*Buck.* (*astonished.*) Edith!

*Edith.* Mr. Buckthorpe!

*Buck.* How strange that we should meet thus!

*Trot.* Eh? Why, what's this? You are old friends?

*Edith.* Oh yes! I had the pleasure of knowing Mr. Buckthorpe some years ago, before papa's death. I then went to India, and we have never met since. I am very glad to see you.

*Trot.* So am I. I don't know you, sir; but as a friend of my poor brother's I am heartily glad to make your acquaintance. Are you making a long stay?

*Buck.* Well, yes—some weeks, I think.

*Trot.* That's right! Then we shall see something of each other. I must be off to join Bangles. We are going to take shootings here, and we shall be delighted to give you a gun.



Good morning, Mr. Buckthorpe! You and Edith can talk over old times. [Exit TROTWAY, R. U. E.]

*Buck.* This is a strange meeting, Edith!

*Edith.* It is, indeed, Mr. Buckthorpe!

*Buck.* Mr. Buckthorpe!

*Edith.* Yes; we are merely friends now.

*Buck.* Are—are you married?

*Edith.* No.

*Buck.* Are you engaged?

*Edith.* No.

*Buck.* Then you have quite ceased to love me?

*Edith.* You have no right to ask me that. My poor father forbade me even to speak to you again. He is dead.

*Buck.* So I heard. He was very hard on me.

*Edith.* He was very just.

*Buck.* Yes; but it is as hard to distinguish extreme justice from extreme injustice, as to distinguish extreme heat from extreme cold. I was a penniless spendthrift, and I suppose he was right; but it would have made a good man of me, if I had married you.

*Edith.* Was he to know that?

*Buck.* No; but you knew it.

*Edith.* I believed it. I am sure I could have influenced you.

*Buck.* Why, from the first day I saw you, my life changed. During the six months that our acquaintance lasted I was an altered man. You loved me then—I know you did. I was amazed—astounded when I learnt this; it opened out a prospect of a new and changed life to me; it had never entered my head that a good and pure woman could love such a man as I. I have known so few, Edith; and those I have known have treated me as a hopeless outcast.

*Edith.* Oh, Mr. Buckthorpe!

*Buck.* They have had good reason to do so. I had been left to my own ways all my life, to make what associates I pleased, and when I entered the service, I was banished to a foreign station where time hung heavily on my hands, and where the devil of mischief had full opportunity of working his worst with me. Under different auspices I might have been a different man—I am sure of this, from the influence that association with so pure and good a woman as you had over me. Oh, Edith, I am a miserable fellow! (*Sits at table.*)

*Edith.* I—I am truly sorry to hear you say this. Mr. Buckthorpe, you pain me deeply.

*Buck.* After your father dismissed me from your presence, I

lived on in hope that circumstances—I knew not how—might bring us together again. But he died, and you had to join your uncle in India, and the sun went down on the only bright day my miserable life had known!

*Edith.* Mr. Buckthorpe, it is not fair to tell me all this. When I told you that I loved you, I knew nothing of your past life—you seemed to me to be all that a man should be. I loved you, because you realised my dream of what a man should be; but when I learnt the circumstances of your past career, my eyes were opened to the folly of my dream, and if you had died on the day that I owned my love for you, I should not have suffered greater anguish. [Sits.]

*Buck.* But, Edith, you could not say this to me if you had wholly ceased to love me.

*Edith.* Mr. Buckthorpe, do not mistake me; I love the memory of an ideal man. The man I love has no existence—he never lived. I loved the man whom I believed Reginald Buckthorpe to be.

*Buck.* I was a good man when we parted—I may say so now; for I am good no longer. I look back on those six months in my life as on an episode in the life of another man. Edith, have pity on me—give me another chance.

*Edith.* No; I am bound by my father's wishes. He is dead.

*Buck.* He is dead, and therefore cannot recall his words. He knew nothing, except that my career had been wild, reckless, extravagant. He attributed my altered life to interested hypocrisy—because you had wealth, and I was poor. But when he knew me, I was indeed a changed man. Edith, you loved me. Where is the man whose heart would not be purified by such love as yours?

[EDITH appears undecided how to act.]

*Enter RANDALL from L. and through C.*

*Rand.* (aside to BUCKTHORPE). Very good.

*Buck.* What do you mean?

*Rand.* I mean very good. I mean that you've lost no time—you've been going it, you babe of nature!

*Buck.* I don't understand you.

*Rand.* Don't you? I mean that you've lost no time in commencing operations. This is the young lady whose thirty-eight thousand pounds I claim.

*Buck.* Edith Temple?

*Rand.* Exactly. Didn't you know that? Introduce me.

*Buck.* She is a lady.

*Rand.* You'd better do as I tell you.

*Buck. (reluctantly).* Miss Temple—Mr. Randall. [*Retires up.*]

*Rand.* Miss Temple, I had the pleasure of knowing your uncle, Doctor Trotway, in India, some years ago.

*Edith.* Indeed?

*Rand.* Yes, we renewed our acquaintance this morning. (*To BUCKTHORPE.*) I had no idea that Miss Temple and you were acquainted.

*Edith.* Yes, we are old friends, but we have not met for some years.

*Rand. (aside).* This simplifies matters. Young people who are old friends, and who haven't met for some years, generally get very confidential when they do meet.

*Enter MISS SPINN and BANGLES.*

*Miss S.* Well, we've settled all preliminaries. There are three carriages, and a donkey cart, which I am going to drive.

*Edith.* How many names have you, Miss Spinn?

*Miss S. (referring to list).* Sixteen.

[*EDITH and BUCKTHORPE retire up.*]

*Rand. (crossing to MISS SPINN).* Have you really got sixteen names? Fifteen of 'em aliases! That beats me hollow.

*Miss S.* I really have! and I want one more to be complete.

*Bang. (aside).* I know you do—mine! But you won't get it. (*Aloud.*) Perhaps these gentlemen will join you?

*Rand.* Certainly—oh, Buckthorpe?

*Miss S.* Oh, but that's two, and it will throw out all my arrangements. Never mind, Mr. Bangles, you and I will charter the donkey cart.

*Bang.* Impossible!

*Miss S.* Why?

*Bang.* I don't enjoy riding in donkey carts, besides we should never keep pace with the others, we should drop behind.

*Miss S. (tenderly).* A little, perhaps—half a mile or so—not more. That wouldn't matter a bit!

*Bang.* It would spoil the whole thing, ma'am. It's the essence of a thing of this kind that all should arrive at the same moment.

*Miss S.* Then we two will start an hour before the others, and get everything ready—there it's quite settled, Mr. Bangles, that I take you in my trap.

*Rand. (aside).* Egad, it looks like it!

*Bang.* No, no—it would be better if Edith and I were to go together, eh—Edith?—and——

*Miss S.* Wouldn't do at all. It would never do to take the only young unmarried lady out of the party. Besides, what would people think? Now two old fogies like us can do what we like?

*Bang.* I wish we could.

*Miss S.* Mr. Bangles, I'm shocked at you! There, that's all settled, and if these gentlemen will give me their names——

*Rand.* Mr. Randall—Mr. Buckthorpe.

*Buck.* Excuse me, I can take no part in this excursion. I leave for London to-night.

*Enter Dr. Trotway.*

*Edith.* Oh, Buckthorpe!

*Buck.* I leave for London to-night. [With deliberation.]

*Rand. (aside).* Are you mad?

*Trot.* What's that? You told me you intended to remain some weeks.

*Buck.* Circumstances have occurred which render necessary my immediate presence in London. There is a Chancery suit—involving my succession to a large fortune——

*Rand.* But you knew of that this morning, my bleating lambkin, you knew of that this morning.

*Edith (aside).* Is this on my account?

*Buck.* It is.

*Edith.* Then, on my account, stay.

*Buck.* I cannot—you don't know all!

*Rand.* I think on reflection you will see that this haste is unnecessary. (*Takes him aside.*) If you attempt to leave this place until I give you permission, I will place your letters in the hands of the local police—you know me well. (*Aloud.*) Ladies and gentlemen, I have the pleasure to inform you that I have convinced Mr. Buckthorpe that his intended departure is unnecessary. He will have much pleasure in joining your party!

## ACT II.

SCENE.—*The Clump Rocks. The entrance to a large cave occupies the foreground of stage, with seashore in the distance. The entrance from L. is over large loose rocks; the entrances, R., are open; the two large detached rocks in the centre should be sufficiently flat on their surfaces to serve as tables, and they should be surrounded with rough ledges, about eighteen inches high, to serve as seats; the small detached rock, R., should be about twelve inches high; the stage is covered with other rock-work to mask the rising of the water.*

SERVANTS discovered arranging lunch, superintended by MISS SPINN—BANGLES sitting moodily apart, endeavouring to turn out a jelly.

Miss S. Well, Mr. Bangles, how are you getting on with that jelly?

Bang. Ma'am, the confounded thing won't come.

Miss S. Put it back into the warm water. (*Coming down.*) Mr. Bangles, I often think that I'm very like a jelly. A good and clever husband might melt me down and pour me into any mould he pleased.

Bang. Ma'am, it's a privilege of which he would be certain to avail himself at the earliest opportunity. But I don't think you'd "turn out" well.

Miss S. Yes I should, dear. A little gentle warmth—such as I apply to this jelly.

Bang. Gentle warmth? Nothing short of perpetual hot water would do it.

Miss S. (*crossing to BANGLES*). And would you try the hot water?

Bang. I would, indeed, ma'am.

Miss S. (*earnestly*). Perpetual hot water?

Bang. Perpetual hot water.

Miss S. Hot water that would not cool down as time went on; water that would be always, always hot?

Bang. Ma'am, it would be as hot as fire could make it.

Miss S. Ardent soul! We will talk of this again.

Bang. Really, Miss Spinn—

Miss S. Oh, Joseph, I am so happy!

Bang. Hold up, ma'am, pray—this is extremely awkward. They are coming, ma'am, and we shall be caught!

Miss S. You are right, we must be discreet—we must be very—very prudent. I am not angry—indeed I am not angry,

you imprudent headstrong boy! There, hush, they are coming; we will speak of this again at a more convenient time. Oh, Joseph, I am so happy!

*Enter DR. TROTWAY and MR. and MRS. FLAMBOYS, over rocks.*

*Bang.* Miss Spinn, I—That woman would extract a proposal of marriage from the Pope of Rome! [*Takes stage, r.*

*Trot.* Take care, Mrs. Flamboys, the rocks are very slippery. Well, Miss Spinn, you have arranged everything, I see.

*Bang.* Yes, Miss Spinn has arranged everything.

*Trot.* I always said she was a capital manager.

*Bang.* And I heartily endorse the observation!

*Mrs. F.* Here come the turtle-doves. Ah, I wonder how long it will last?

[*MR. and MRS. FLAMBOYS seat themselves in front of detached rock, l.*

*Enter MR. and MRS. SCANTLEBURY, over the rocks.*

*Scant.* Come along, my angel. Ladies and gentlemen, oblige me by looking the other way while Mrs. Scantlebury climbs over the rocks. (*They do so.*) Now jump.

*Mrs. Scant.* Edward, if anybody is looking, I shall go and drown myself! There. [*Jumps.*

*Flamb.* May we look now?

*Scant.* You may. [*They stand in an attitude of embrace.*

*All.* Beautiful!

*Miss S.* Are we all here?

*Enter RANDALL.*

*Rand.* No, there's Miss Temple to come, and Buckthorpe. I tell you what it is, I vote we don't wait for them.

*Trot.* We won't wait for them. It will serve them right. Won't it, Bangles?

*Miss S.* Oh, but that would be a pity. Suppose, Mr. Bangles, you and I start off to meet them and hurry them on.

*Trot.* No, no, leave them alone. They must be taught that if they chose to separate themselves from the rest of the party, they must be prepared to take the consequences. (*They seat themselves—MR. and MRS. SCANTLEBURY at lower rock, DR. TROTWAY at higher rock—BANGLES on small rock, and MISS SPINN on humper between BANGLES and MR. SCANTLEBURY—RANDALL standing, c.*) Let them lunch together.

*Rand. (aside).* Where shall I sit? (*He makes one or two attempts to sit near MRS. FLAMBOYS and MRS. SCANTLEBURY,*

they close up to prevent his doing so.) Somehow, I'm afraid I'm not a favourite here. There's Mrs. Flamboys—she's a nice little thing—black eyes, plump figure, and doesn't get on with her husband. She'll do. (*Sits near Mrs. FLAMBOYS.*) I know I'm not a pleasant person to look at, but my conversation is considered sparkling. I'll try and sparkle. (*Aloud.*) Mrs. Flamboys!

*Mrs. F.* Yes.

*Rand.* (*sentimentally*). Do you believe in first impressions?

*Mrs. F.* Sincerely."

*Rand.* (*taken aback*). Oh! But don't you find that your first estimate of a man is sometimes a mistaken one?

*Mrs. F.* (*with decision*). Never. (*Aside.*) I wish this person would go.

*Rand.* Humph! Cold shoulder!

*Mrs. F.* Mr. Flamboys, if it's not asking you too great a favour, I should like a little lobster salad.

*Flamb.* Oh, hang it! Can't you get it yourself?

*Rand.* What an ill-bred boor it is. Allow me, Mrs. Flamboys. [*Gives her salad.*]

*Mrs. F.* Oh, thank you. (*Aside to FLAMBOYS.*) I can't touch it after that dreadful man; get me something else—anything.

*Flamb.* My darling—there. [*Gives her chicken.*]

*Mrs. F.* Thank you, dearest. What are you eating?

*Flamb.* Nothing. I live on love.

*Mrs. F.* My darling!

*Flamb.* My pet!

*Trot.* Ha!—hem!

*Flamb.* (*rudely*). Here, somebody give my wife something—she won't touch anything I give her.

*Mrs. F.* No, thank you; I've finished. Ah, I had an appetite once!

*Flamb.* You had—enormous!

*Mrs. F.* Brute!

*Rand.* (*who has gone round to Mrs. SCANTLEBURY*). Mrs. Scantlebury, do you believe in first impressions? [*Pathetically.*]

*Mrs. Scant.* (*startled*). Bless and save the man—what does he mean?

*Rand.* (*reproachfully*). Ah, and you, too, give me the cold shoulder!

*Mrs. Scant.* Some cold shoulder for Mr. Randall.

*Scant.* Certainly, Randall. Shall I put some mint sauce over it? [*Turning away from him.*]

*Rand.* Devilish odd; they don't seem to like me at all.  
(*Aloud.*) Thanks, I have some pigeon pie.

*Trot.* Then have some more. [*Gives him some.*]

*Rand.* Is this pigeon?

*Trot.* No, it's rook.

*Flamb.* They go very well together, don't they, Randall?

*Scant.* It's a great Homburg dish, isn't it, Randall?

*Trot.* Rook and pigeon, with a good steak, is a dish you're always glad to have a finger in, ain't you, Randall.

*Mrs. Scant.* A finger? (*To RANDALL.*) There's no occasion to use your fingers, sir! Allow me to hand you a fork.

*Flamb.* Randall always prefers a spoon if he can get one; don't you, Randall?

*Scant.* I can provide you with one. [*Offers one.*]

*Rand.* I'm sure you can. Thank you.

*Scant.* What do you mean by that, sir? [*Rising.*]

*Rand.* You were born with a silver one in your mouth, were you not?

*Scant.* Well, sir, and if I was, sir—and if I was, sir?

*Rand.* Well, I meant that one. [*Goes round to MISS SPINN.*]

*Scant.* (*aside to MRS. SCANTLEBURY.*) Now, how the deuce did he know I was born with a silver spoon in my mouth.

*Mrs. Scant.* He traced it in your conversation.

*Scant.* (*angrily.*) Frederica.

*Mrs. Scant.* Horace!

*Scant.* (*recollecting himself.*) My own!

*Mrs. Scant.* My love!

*Flamb.* Scantlebury, leave your wife alone, do.

*Mrs. Scant.* Sir! Mr. Scantlebury is not in the habit of letting his wife alone. If you are envious of Mr. Scantlebury's happiness —

*Flamb.* But I'm not.

*Scant.* You're right, Flamboys.

*Mrs. Scant.* Horace! [*Angrily.*]

*Scant.* Frederica!

*Mrs. Scant.* (*recollecting herself.*) My love!

*Scant.* My own. [*They embrace.*]

*Rand.* Miss Spinn!

[RANDALL in the meantime has gone round to MISS SEINN, introducing himself between MISS SPINN and BANGLES.]

*Miss S.* Well?

*Rand.* Do you believe in first impressions?

*Miss S.* Oh, I don't believe in anything.

*Rand.* I'm glad of that, it shows a sense beyond your years.



*I* believe in nothing, but *I* have been five and thirty years learning that nothing is worthy of belief. If I had known it at your age, I should have been a happier man.

*Miss S.* Indeed!

*Rand.* Yes—alas! I have lived a life of trust!

*Miss S.* A life on trust you mean. (*Aside.*) I wish he'd go.

*Rand.* And my trust has been utterly misplaced. In me you behold a wasted destiny. I was made to be believed in, but no one believes in me! You don't seem surprised.

*Miss S.* Well, I'm not.

*Rand.* Ah, you are like the rest of the world—you, whom I had thought so different. You see that I am ugly, and you conclude that I am wicked.

*Miss S.* Oh, I didn't say that! (*Aside.*) He is extremely plain.

*Rand.* Oh, I don't complain, ma'am. It's natural enough; I myself often act on the converse of the proposition. I see that you are beautiful and I conclude that you are good.

*Miss S.* (*aside*). Poor fellow! How nicely he expresses himself. I am afraid I have judged him harshly. How angry Joseph looks! I'll make him jealous! (*Aloud—rising and coming down.*) But if you knew me better, you might find that I was not—

*Rand.* Beautiful?

*Miss S.* No—good.

*Rand.* Will you let me try?

*Miss S.* (*bashfully*). Yes.

*Trot.* Come, we must be off to the caves if we want to see them—the tide is coming in, and this place will be under water in half an hour. Bangles, give your arm to Miss Spinn.

[*He does so—SERVANTS begin to clear away.*]

*Rand.* Pardon me, I claim Miss Spinn. It's an engagement five minutes old.

[*Takes her.*]

*Bang.* Thank you—thank you sincerely.

[*Shakes RANDALL's hand.*]

*Miss S.* (*aside*). Oh, you sarcastic creature! There'll be blood spilt, I know there will! (*To RANDALL.*) Swear that you will not fight on my account!

*Rand.* I swear!

[*ALL exeunt, except BANGLES and DR. TROTWAY.*]

*Trot.* Come along, Joe, you and I'll pair off together.

*Bang.* No—I'm out of sorts.

*Trot.* Why, what's wrong?

*Bang.* Well, to be candid with you, I don't like to see Edith and that fellow Buckthorpe so much together.

*Trot.* Young people Joe—young people! We were young once, you know.

*Bang.* (*sadly.*) Yes once. (*Aside.*) They're always together—on the beach, on the parade, on the pier—wherever she goes he's sure to turn up with his confounded "Miss Temple, this is indeed an unexpected pleasure!" Unexpected—bah! Why, he knows her movements to a minute, and her plans for a week to come.

*Trot.* This is rather a critical moment in Buckthorpe's existence. He is expecting every minute to hear that a Chancery suit has determined in his favour, and if it does, it will put him in possession of a considerable fortune.

*Bang.* The deuce it will!

*Trot.* Yes. As Edith and I were walking through Beechwood, yesterday, who should turn up of all people in the world—but Buckthorpe. "Dear me, Miss Temple," said he, "this is indeed an unexpected pleasure."

*Bang.* Bah! Trotway, do you ever go to the play?

*Trot.* Oh, yes; often.

*Bang.* Very good. Then here's a little drama in two acts and a moral that will interest you. Act I—Scene, the Earth. Time, sunrise. Personage discovered: the Astronomer-Royal. The Sun rises in the east. Astronomer-Royal speaks, "God bless my soul," says he, "you rising in the east? This is indeed an unexpected pleasure." End of Act 1. Act 9—Same Scene. Time, sunset. Personages discovered: the Astronomer-Royal, and the Sun about to set. Astronomer-Royal speaks, "God bless my soul," says he, "you setting in the west? This is indeed an unexpected pleasure." Moral—The Astronomer-Royal's a humbug. [*Exit BANGLES.*]

*Trot.* Nonsense, Joe, you're hard on Buckthorpe. It's very odd that Joe Bangles who likes everybody should have taken such a dislike to young Buckthorpe whom everybody else likes so much. I can't account for it.

*Enter EDITH and BUCKTHORPE over the rocks.*

*Trot.* Well, young lady, you've taken your time about it. We've lunched without you.

*Edith.* Uncle, I was so tired, I was obliged to sit down.

*Trot.* Well, we had to remove everything to the top of the cliff, as the tide is rising; so if you want any lunch you'd better come with me—come along Buckthorpe.

[*Exeunt TROTWAY and EDITH.*]

*As BUCKTHORPE is following them, RANDALL enters.*

*Rand.* Stop—I want to speak to you.

*Buck.* Well?

*Rand.* Well, you've been a week at work, and precious good running you've made in the time.

*Buck.* Yes—pretty well.

*Rand.* Nice girl.

*Buck.* Yes.

*Rand.* Pity she has to lose her money?

*Buck.* It is a pity.

*Rand.* Well, you've made good use of your time. I couldn't have got round her in a week as you have.

*Buck.* Oh, you're too modest!

*Rand.* Yes, I am modest. Why, at this moment I know of half-a-dozen ladies—devilish fine women, too—who'd give a good deal to know where I am.

*Buck.* Ladies?

*Rand.* Yes.

*Buck.* What kind of ladies? [*Contemptuously.*]

*Rand.* Landladies. Don't mistake me—it's rent, not spoons. No, no—Jack Randall is not the man to run away from that sort of thing.

*Buck.* No, he's just the sort of man to run away with that sort of thing.

*Rand.* What sort of thing?

*Buck.* Spoons.

*Rand.* My good friend, you don't understand these things. I am not a strictly honest man, but I should no more think of sneaking down an area after a plate basket than you would of sitting down to dinner with a dustman. Damme, sir, pay some regard to social distinctions. If you are a swell, swindle; if you are a snob, sneak. Always rob, according to your station in life. Golden maxim.

*Buck.* Then, by your own admission you're a swindler.

*Rand.* I'm a chess-player.

*Buck.* But you cheat.

*Rand.* No—I finesse.

*Buck.* I don't understand the distinction.

*Rand.* I'll make it clear to you. I have a scheme to take your queen. To effect this, I arrange that my bishop shall occupy this square—my knight that, my rook that, and so forth. If you're a skilful player you detect my scheme and prepare to baffle it; if not, I gain my end. And because I don't explain my tactics beforehand, you kick the board over.

*Buck.* Your games generally end that way, don't they?

*Rand.* Generally. The art of losing with a good grace is an

accomplishment which is very generally neglected. I often wish it was otherwise.

*Buck.* No doubt.

*Rand.* But let's get to business. What have you gathered from this girl about my lamented wife?

*Buck.* Nothing.

*Rand.* Not yet?

*Buck.* No, not yet?

*Rand.* Then, as time's getting on, and as I have very good reasons for not stopping here longer than is necessary, I think you'd better begin.

*Buck.* Oh, you think that?

*Rand.* Yes, I do. Look here, Buckthorpe, I'm not going to stand any nonsense—I've got my fingers round your throat, and one squeeze will choke the life out of you. This evening I must know all about this wife of mine—you've got about an hour to do it in; you'd better begin at once. Here comes the girl. I shall be within hearing, so you'd better be careful.

*Buck.* I would rather you did not listen.

*Rand.* No doubt; but I shall.

[*Randall goes behind rock as EDITH enters.*]

*Edith.* Mr. Buckthorpe, do you know where my uncle is?

*Buck.* No; I have not seen him.

*Edith.* I saw some one with you—

*Buck.* Yes—Mr. Randall.

*Edith.* Oh! Is Mr. Randall a great friend of yours?

[*They sit—EDITH on lower rock with her back to*

*RANDALL, BUCKTHORPE on higher rock facing him.*]

*Buck.* No, he's not a great friend of mine.

*Edith.* Is he—you'll think it a strange question—is he a very nice man?

*Buck.* No, he's not a very nice man.

*Edith.* He doesn't look at all nice.

*Buck.* He is not at all nice. (*RANDALL attempts to go.*) It's about two years since your aunt, Miss Brackenbury, died?

[*RANDALL stays.*]

*Edith.* Just two years, poor old lady.

*Buck.* So Randall told me.

*Edith.* How in the world does he know anything about her?

*Buck.* He is a very well informed man.

*Edith.* Indeed? He looks like a—a—You don't mind my speaking openly about him?

*Buck.* Not at all. I like it.

*Edith.* He looks like a—What do you call those people at fairs and races?

*Buck.* Punch and Judy man?

*Edith.* No, swell mob. Surely he is not a gentleman?

*Buck.* Most surely not.

*Edith.* Then how is it that you and he are so much together? You are so entirely different. He is the worst looking man I ever saw.

[RANDALL going.]

*Buck.* I'll tell you all about that, some day. How old was your aunt when she died?

[RANDALL stops.]

*Edith.* Seventy-nine.

*Buck.* So Randall told me.

*Edith.* Mr. Randall seems to know a great deal about my aunt.

*Buck.* It is part of Mr. Randall's profession to know a great deal about a great many people.

*Edith.* His profession? Is he at the bar?

*Buck.* Very often. He is a swindler—a forger—an adventurer—a low-bred thief, and an utterly unmitigated scoundrel!

[Exit RANDALL.]

*Buck. (rising).* Edith, that man has a terrible hold upon me. He has evidence which implicates me in a crime of which he knows me to be utterly innocent, and he threatens to make that evidence public if I withdraw from his society.

*Edith. (rising).* A crime?

*Buck.* A crime of which, before heaven, I am utterly innocent! I have been weak, imprudent, selfish, dissipated, but my honour, as honour is esteemed by the world, is still unstained.

*Edith.* I am sure of it. Quite, quite sure of it. But is there no prospect of your being able to shake off the influence of this fearful man? Reginald—I am—I am rich—forgive me for what I am going to say—I am rich, and my money is at your disposal. Will you let me help you?

*Buck.* Edith, you have it in your power to help me as no other soul on earth can help me. There is a help that you can give me for which I, who do not often pray, will pray night and day—the help of your companionship—of sweet association with one as good and pure as you. Edith, give me this hope—tell me that, weak, wicked as I have been, I am not beyond the reach of your mercy!

*Edith.* Who am I, Reginald, that I should set myself up as a judge of your conduct? I have been so hedged about from the very approach of temptation, that I can only guess at the meaning of the word. I have been jealously guarded through life, by strong, and wise, and loving counsellors. I have never had one wish thwarted. I have revelled in the happiest life

that this world can bestow, and shall I sit in judgment upon you who have been left from boyhood to your own courses—turned adrift into the world without friends, without counsel, and without example—to fight the world unadvised, unaided, and alone? Oh, Reginald, I am more just!

*Buck.* Edith, your words give me new life—new hope. I have been an outcast so long, that I had almost given up the struggle with the world in despair.

*Edith.* Still the world is a good world; you were your worst enemy—

*Buck.* Yes; God help him of whom that may be said! A brave man can grapple with an outside foe—and if he falls, he falls with honour. But when one's deadliest enemy is locked up in one's own heart, ever present, and ever watchful to take advantage of weakness known only to itself—his case is desperate indeed! Yes; I was my worst enemy. I knew the strength of my weakness, and I surrendered to it at discretion.

*Edith.* But there is yet time. You are young and strong and brave—you have that within you, which, under due guidance, may yet place you high among your fellows.

*Buck.* And where shall I look for that guidance—to you?

*Edith.* Reginald, I am a poor, weak, inexperienced girl—a baby in the world—untempted and untried. I do not know myself, for I have been put to no proof. I am unfitted for so great a charge!

*Buck. (passionately).* Edith, in your hands I place my life—do with it what you will. It is my last—my only hope! Tell me that you will take it into your keeping.

*Edith (after a pause).* If you think me worthy to undertake this great charge—yes.

*Buck.* Bear in mind what I am—what I have been—an adventurer—an outcast.

*Edith.* I think only of what you will be, when you have separated yourself from the evil influences that have hitherto surrounded you. It may be within my power to help you to do that; if it is, I will help you with all my heart, with all my soul. Reginald, I *will* be your guide.

*Buck.* For life?

*Edith.* For life.

[*They retire up, and go off.*]

*Enter Mrs. SCANTLEBURY and FLAMBOYS.*

*Mrs. Scant.* How delightful this is, Mr. Flamboys! How pure—how grand—how calm! I don't know whether I admire the ocean most under its present peaceful aspect, or when it is lashed into fury by the demon of the storm.

*Flamb.* I do. When it is lashed into fury by the demon of the storm, there's no fish for breakfast next day.

*Mrs. Scant.* I'm afraid you've no romance, Mr. Flamboys.

*Flamb.* Not a grain; I had plenty of it when I was your age.

*Mrs. Scant.* Oh, Mr. Flamboys, you are surely younger than I! [*Bashfully.*]

*Flamb.* Oh, much—in years—but I mean matrimonially speaking. I mean when I was first married.

*Mrs. Scant.* Oh!

*Flamb.* But Mrs. Flamboys soon knocked that out of me.

*Mrs. Scant.* Indeed?

*Flamb.* Yes. Mrs. Flamboys has no romance. She is as matter-of-fact as the multiplication table, and quite as difficult to master. Now, when I married, my conversation was so metaphorical that no one understood me. In fact, Mrs. Flamboys hooked me by placing a matter-of-fact interpretation upon a flowery invitation to dance. She married me through a metaphor, and fixed me with a figure of speech. And a pretty dance she's led me ever since.

*Mrs. Scant.* Poor Mr. Flamboys! That was enough to cure you of romance.

*Flamb.* Yes, but it didn't. After my marriage, I surrounded myself with a mamelon of metaphor—a palladium of poetry—a fortress of figure of speech—but it was of no good, Mrs. Flamboys battered it all down.

*Mrs. Scant.* Battered it all down? What with?

*Flamb.* Babies. Four of 'em—George, Thomas, William, and John.

*Mrs. Scant.* And how old are they?

*Flamb.* Oh, I don't know! The youngest may be ten days.

*Mrs. Scant.* Ten days! [*Astonished.*]

*Flamb.* (*confused*) No, no—I mean ten years.

*Mrs. Scant.* Ten years! [*Horried.*]

*Flamb.* No, no—what am I saying? Ten months—months—months! I know it's ten something. (*Aside.*) I wish this woman would go.

*Mrs. Scant.* Poor Mr. Flamboys! Do you know, the more I see of Mrs. Flamboys the more I pity you.

*Flamb.* The deuce you do!—that is—of course—thank you—thank you sincerely. (*Aside.*) I wish Scantlebury would come and fetch her away.

*Mrs. Scant.* Any one can see that you are not happily mated. It is a great pity, for you are young, and—and—good-looking.

*Flamb.* Eh? [*Frightened.*]

*Mrs. Scant.* (*simpering*) Very good-looking. I may say so, Mr. Flamboys, for I am old enough to be your—aunt!—aunt.

*Flamb.* Quite. Wouldn't you like to rejoin Mr. Scantlebury?

*Mrs. Scant.* Oh, dear, no, Scantlebury's all right; that is—yes, if you please. Dear Mr. Scantlebury, where can he be? (*Looks off, R.—then aside.*) Here he comes (*Aloud.*) I think I see him over there. (*Points off, L.*) Will you take me to him?

[*Exeunt* MRS. SCANTLEBURY *ogling* MR. FLAMBOYS, L.]

*Enter* MR. SCANTLEBURY and MRS. FLAMBOYS, R.

*Mrs. F.* There's Mrs. Scantlebury; I'm so glad you've found her at last.

*Scant.* Ah, to be sure, there is Mrs. Scantlebury.

*Mrs. F.* And with Mr. Flamboys. (*Aside.*) Poor boy, how he must be suffering! Well?

*Scant.* Well, ma'am?

*Mrs. F.* We had better join them, hadn't we?

*Scant.* Join them? Never!

*Mrs. F.* Yes; my husband will take charge of me.

*Scant.* No, Mrs. Flamboys, I can't permit you to make so great a sacrifice on my account.

*Mrs. F.* Sacrifice?

*Scant.* Yes; you are happier with me, ma'am; he means well, I dare say, but he's a brute.

*Mrs. F.* But still—Mrs. Scantlebury—she will be anxious about you if you keep away from her on my account.

*Scant.* Mrs. Scantlebury has every confidence in me. Besides, the longer I keep away from her, the better pleased she will be to see me when I return to her. I want her to be extremely pleased to see me, so I shall keep away from her as long as possible. I didn't leave Mrs. Scantlebury's side all day until an hour ago, and after twenty-four hours of it, I'm afraid even my society may begin to pall upon her.

*Mrs. F.* Oh, impossible, Mr. Scantlebury.

*Scant.* Yes, it seems so to you, because you see me at my best. But I'm not always the lightsome thing you see before you. I have my moments of depression—I feel one coming on now. Let me see—what is it that cheers, but don't inebriate?

*Mrs. F.* Oh, it's some cup—

*Scant.* It's some cup. Perhaps it's champagne cup? (*Pours out some from tankard which BANGLES has left on higher rock, and drinks.*) It is champagne cup. [*Takes some more.*]

*Mrs. F.* Indeed, I think we'd better go. (*Aside.*) There's



Edward still with that horrible woman—I'm sure he's dying to get away from her. (*Aloud.*) Come, Mr. Scantlebury, you must take me to my husband.

*Scant.* (*getting tipsy*). Your husband? Never! Your husband's a brute!

*Mrs. F.* Well, never mind that.

*Scant.* He's a brute, ma'am; he's not worthy of you—Is he worthy of you?

*Mrs. F.* No, no—perhaps not—but still——

*Scant.* But still you want to go to him? It's a beautiful trait in your character—a beautiful trait. (*Drinks.*) Yes, this is the cup I've heard of. It cheers, but it don't inebriate. I'm quite cheerful now, ma'am. Flamboys is a brute—he insults his wife, and beats his children. He beats his children, don't he?

*Mrs. F.* Oh, yes, yes!

[*Impatiently.*]

*Scant.* (*indignantly*). He beats his children. How many are there?

*Mrs. F.* Oh, four.

*Scant.* Four! I'll drink all their healths. What are their names?

*Mrs. F.* Oh, I don't know.

*Scant.* Don't know? That's nonsense.

*Mrs. F.* Oh, Jane, Emma, Mary, and Kate.

*Scant.* Jane, Emma, Mary, and Kate! Beautiful names! God bless 'em all. [*Drinks.*]

*Mrs. F.* Now, Mr. Scantlebury, once for all, I must insist on your rejoining Mrs. Scantlebury.

*Scant.* Never mind Mrs. Scantlebury. I've plenty of Mrs. Scantlebury at home. It's astonishing how soon one gets sick of Mrs. Scantlebury. She's a fine woman, but a very little of Mrs. Scantlebury goes a long way. I wish a great deal of Mrs. Scantlebury would go a long way—and stop there!

*Mrs. F.* Mr. Scantlebury! Is this the way you speak of a wife to whom you haven't been married three weeks?

*Scant.* Three weeks. Thirty-five—(*recollecting.*) Yes, three weeks! She's too good for me, Mrs. Flamboys. It's too much happiness for one man! She's a noble woman, ma'am, and I've much pleasure in drinking her health. Take me to her! I'll allow you to have the pleasure of taking me to her!

*Mrs. F.* Thank goodness, here she is.

*Enter Mrs. SCANTLEBURY with FLAMBOYS, I.*

*Scant.* Just as we were getting on so com-com-comf-ably!

*Mrs. F.* Mrs. Scantlebury, we've been looking for you everywhere. Allow me to hand Mr. Scantlebury over into your keeping—he appears to be unwell.

*Mrs. Scant.* Unwell!

[*Rushes to him.*]

*Scant.* Unwell? Never berrer.

*Flamb.* (*indignantly, L.*). Unwell? Why, he's tipsy!

*Scant.* (*explains*) It's a pic-nic.

*Mrs. Scant.* (*c.*). Why, Horace, dearest Horace, what is the matter? Speak, I implore! (*To MR. and MRS. FLAMBOYS.*) Don't be alarmed, he is often so.

*Scant.* Matter? Matter's plain enough—I'm tip-tip-tipsy. It's a pic-nic. Don't be alarmed. I'm often so.

*Mrs. Scant.* Come with me, love, come with me. (*Aside, viciously.*) And if I don't talk you sober in five minutes, my name's not Scantlebury.

*Scant.* If your name's not Scantlebury, I decline to recognize your authority.

*Mrs. Scant.* I say if I don't talk you sober in five minutes, my name's not Scantlebury!

*Scant.* Then I shan't know whether you're entitled to take such a liberty until you've taken it.

*Mrs. Scant.* Edward, you forget yourself. Remember, if you please, that we are a newly-married couple.

*Scant.* So we are—that's 'scuse for everything. (*To MRS. FLAMBOYS.*) If my remarks have 'peared a little incoherent, please be good enough to attribute it to the fact that I'm a newly married couple—and that's 'scuse for everything!

[*Exeunt MR. and MRS. SCANTLEBURY, MR. and MRS. FLAMBOYS rush to each other's arms.*]

*Enter BUCKTHORPE, unobserved. He coughs—they see him and disengage.*

*Mrs. F. (angrily).* Oh Mr. Flamboys! your brutality will break my heart.

[*Exeunt MR. and MRS. FLAMBOYS, as if quarrelling.*]

*Enter RANDALL, in a rage.*

*Rand.* Now, you're a pretty fellow!

*Buck. (sits on rock).* You're good enough to say so.

*Rand.* I overheard what you told that girl about me.

*Buck.* I know you did—that's why I said it.

*Rand.* And do you think I'm going to stand this?

*Buck.* No. I thought you wouldn't like it—I told you you had better not listen,

*Rand.* And I told you that I didn't agree with you.

*Buck.* Well, you see I was right.

*Rand.* You infernal scoundrel! I——

*Buck.* Stop! If this is to resolve itself into a duel of bad language, I give in. With these weapons I'm no match for you.

*Rand.* Do you know what you've done? Do you know that you've blown upon me? Do you know that instead of helping my game on, you've spoilt it beyond redemption?

*Buck.* I hope so.

*Rand.* Do you know that what you've told that girl will be all over the place to-morrow? Do you know—curse you!—that you've made it too hot to hold me?

*Buck.* Yes, I think so. If I haven't, I will. Randall, it's a fearful thing to feel that one is dependent on the mercy of such a man as you.

*Rand.* So it is.

*Buck.* I am, unhappily dependent on that mercy.

*Rand.* Entirely.

*Buck.* You have in your possession letters that implicate me in the death of that unhappy man Peters. There's a reward of three hundred pounds for my apprehension; and, as you say, you could earn that reward to-morrow!

*Rand.* To-night.

*Buck.* Very well then—earn it.

[*Rising.*

*Rand.* What?

*Buck.* Earn it, I say.

*Rand.* Are you mad, Buckthorpe?

*Buck.* I am. I am maddened by the hold you have upon me. I'm maddened by the fact that it depends upon the will and pleasure of such a hound as you, whether I, an innocent man, go free, or stand at a criminal bar on a charge of murder. I am mad, and I shall be mad until that hold is removed. So do your worst—I've made up my mind, and I'll chance it.

*Rand.* Come—be reasonable. I only want you to help me to my own.

*Buck.* Damn your own! If it's your own, prove your claim to it yourself. I've been under your thumb long enough, and I'll shake myself free or take the consequences. Randall, your fearful presence has haunted me, night and day, for two years. Your infernal threats have reduced me from the position of a gentleman to be your miserable associate. You've been the nightmare of my life. When I was falling you pulled me down, and held me down when I might have risen. You've flavoured my miserable life with the taint of your own. You cursed jail-bird! You proclaimed thief! Be off, for my hands are not my

own just now! Be off, and do your worst, for as there's a heaven above us, I'll do mine!

*Rand.* Buckthorpe, if I consulted my personal feeling towards you, I'd take you at your word to-night. If I spare you till to-morrow, it is because it is to my interest to give you one more chance. If you have not procured the information I want by twelve o'clock to-morrow, you're a dead man. I give you this chance—not out of any consideration for you, whom I would gladly see dead at my feet—but because I prefer thirty-eight thousand to three hundred. And one or the other I will have. Good evening. [Exit RANDALL.]

*Buck.* What have I done? *(Makes a movement as if to call him back.)* No, no! I mustn't let him see that I feel his power over me. I've taken up my position, and I must stand or fall by it. No, no; I think I'm safe. There's a warrant out for his arrest on a charge of forgery. I might lay information against him, if I knew details of the charge; but then he would be brought to bay, and he'd turn upon me, and this miserable affair would come to light—and then, Edith! No, I can't do that—I can't do that.

*Enter MISS SPINN.*

*Miss S.* Mr. Buckthorpe, was that Mr. Randall who left you just now?

*Buck.* Yes.

*Miss S.* Humph. I don't like Mr. Randall a bit.

*Buck.* Indeed!

*Miss S.* No. He took me to see the caves, and he wanted to give half-a-crown to the woman who shows them.

*Buck.* Well, there's no harm in that.

*Miss S.* Not a bit, only—he'd forgotten his purse.

*Buck.* I see; and he borrowed yours?

*Miss S.* No, he didn't. Fortunately, I had forgotten mine too. Now, I don't like other people who've forgotten their purses.

*Buck.* And how did you settle it?

*Miss S.* I promised to make it up to her in sandwiches; but she said she couldn't drink sandwiches. "Well, but you couldn't drink half-a-crown," said I. "Oh, couldn't I!" said she. And I really believe she could!

*Enter MR. BANGLES and EDITH.*

*Buck.* Edith! *(Going to her.)*

*Bang.* That woman here? How very annoying!

[Sits on lower rock.

*Miss S.* Mr. Bangles, why, what in the world is the matter? (*Aside.*) Oh, you foolish, you foolish, jealous boy! Because he's found me here alone with Mr. Buckthorpe! Why, you silly child, Mr. Buckthorpe is dying for Edith! See how glad they are to get together again. Why, I came here to find you.

*Bang.* To find me?

*Miss S.* Yes; I began to think you had been punished enough.

*Bang.* So I have; too much!

*Miss S.* Bless your heart, I only did it to tease you.

[EDITH and BUCKTHORPE are seated on high rock.—

BANGLES and MISS SPINN on low rock.

*Bang.* (*looking at BUCKTHORPE*). Confound the fellow—how happy he seems! And how happy she seems too!

[During this conversation the tide has risen and surrounded both rocks.

*Miss S.* Oh, Mr. Bangles! the water! We're surrounded!

*Bang.* Eh? Confound it, I thought we were above high-water mark.

*Miss S.* Mr. Bangles, this is a trick!

*Bang.* A trick, ma'am?

*Miss S.* Yes, I see it all. It's a planned thing to get me alone. Oh, Mr. Bangles, this is unmanly, unmanly! What will people say? [*Pretends to weep.*

*Bang.* Absurd! What the deuce are we to do?

*Miss S.* If I believed that this was a planned thing to enjoy my society alone, until the tide goes down, I'd never, never speak to you again!

*Bang.* You wouldn't?

*Miss S.* Indeed, I wouldn't.

*Bang.* You promise that?

*Miss S.* I do!

*Bang.* Then I'll confess all. It *was* a planned thing. I settled it with Buckthorpe an hour ago. There—now keep your promise.

*Miss S.* Do you really mean to tell me this?

*Bang.* Certainly; no doubt about it.

*Miss S.* Oh, Joe, dear Joe!

*Bang.* Ma'am, you said you'd never speak to me again.

*Miss S.* But I didn't mean it, Joe.

*Bang.* (*Aside*). I must put an end to this. (*Aloud.*) Miss Spinn, let us come to the point. It's an awkward thing to

have to say to a lady, but I can't close my eyes to the fact that you seem to think that I—in short that—I propose to marry you.

*Miss S.* You do?

*Bang.* (*decidedly*) I do!

*Miss S.* You propose to marry me? Oh, Joseph, how good you are to me!

*Bang.* Hang the woman! (*aloud*) Miss Spinn, let me assure you that—

*Miss S.* You may call me Adelaide, Joe. [*Shyly.*

*Bang.* Miss Spinn—

*Miss S.* I say you may call me Adelaide.

*Bang.* Well, then, Adelaide, I am sorry if my manner has conveyed a false impression, but—

*Miss S.* No, Joseph—I knew that you were very fond of me, but I hardly expected a formal declaration so soon; still, I am not angry—indeed, I am pleased—gratified—delighted! But, give me till to-morrow to decide before I take the final and irrevocable plunge! Oh, the water—the water! Mr. Bangles! we shall be drowned! Miss Temple—Mr. Buckthorpe! see—we are surrounded, and I shall be drowned!—and in my new silk!

*Buck.* Hallo! (*sees his situation*) This is awkward!—but you are quite safe. The sea is as smooth as glass, and the tide is almost at its highest. At the very worst, you'll only get a wetting.

*Bang.* Edith, you will be drowned!

*Buck.* Oh no—the water never covers this rock in calm weather, except at spring tides; but as your rock will be a few inches under water, you had better signal for a boat.

*Bang.* But you—what will you do, Edith?

*Buck.* Oh, we shall be all right. I'll take care of Miss Temple till the tide goes down.

*Miss S.* Oh!—I'm slipping, Joseph! Save me!—save me! Put your arm round me—like that—there—I'm better now. Oh, what shall I do!

*Bang.* If you'll take my advice, ma'am, you'll take off your shoes and stockings, and walk on shore.

*Miss S.* Mr. Bangles!

*Bang.* I won't look, ma'am—upon my honour!

RANDALL enters in boat, in front of lower rock.

*Buck.* Here's a boat. You're quite safe, Miss Spinn.

*Miss S.* Saved—saved! (*Aside.*) That man always turns up when he isn't wanted.

*Bang.* Come, Buckthorpe.

*Rand.* The boat will only hold two. Buckthorpe and Miss Temple are quite safe, as that rock is never covered. Come along, Bangles. [*BANGLES and Miss SPINN get into the boat.*]

*Miss S.* Oh, Mr. Bangles!

*Bang.* What?

*Miss S.* If it had only been the other rock!

[*They are rowed off.*]

*Edith.* How strange to be cut off so completely from the world!

*Buck.* And how pleasant! Here we are on a little world of our own.

*Edith.* King and queen of a tiny kingdom.

*Buck.* With this advantage over other kings and queens—that we have no subjects.

*Edith.* But it's such a very little kingdom.

*Buck.* It is large enough for our wants.

*Edith.* Yes, for an hour or two. How shall we pass the time? Shall I be Robinson Crusoe—and will you be my man Friday?

*Buck.* Yes. Saved by you from enemies who would have destroyed me.

*Edith.* And true and faithful to me, in return, for ever after?

*Buck.* For ever after!

*Edith.* Very well; that's settled. Now, let me see—what happened when Robinson rescued Friday?

*Buck.* Friday kissed Robinson.

*Edith.* Are you sure?

*Buck.* Quite!

[*Kisses her.*]

*Edith.* I don't remember that. Well, then Friday was taught to hunt for Robinson's dinner. Hunt away! Ah, I've puzzled you now!

*Buck.* No. He was taught to hunt for it. Teach me.

*Edith.* I can't do that. However, in this case, Robinson is not hungry.

*Buck.* In other words, Robinson hauls down his colours?

*Edith.* Yes. Surrenders at discretion. The analogy is imperfect. Let us try something else.

*Buck.* What shall we try? I am a storm-tossed vessel, safely anchored in the haven of your love.

*Edith.* It's a poor haven, Reginald—a haven that will afford you little protection against the rude winds of the outer world.

*Buck.* It is a haven of peace and rest—a haven into which sorrow, care, and trouble can never enter. See—the sun is setting, and the sorrows of my life sink with it. From this hour I live a new life—strong in your faith—faithful to my strength. Who would not be strong in the certainty of such love as yours?

*Edith.* My love is for you, Reginald, for ever and for ever.

*Buck.* I have fretted sorely under the yoke that I have had to bear, but I would have borne it patiently had I known that those words were in store for me. I would bear it all again to hear you speak them once more.

*Edith.* There is no need, Reginald!

*Buck.* No need, Edith, for my troubles are at an end. A good, grave, and earnest life is before me, and with your help and your counsel and your example, I will lead that life. Edith, at last I am at peace!

*Enter RANDALL, in boat.*

*Buck. (aside)* Randall! *(aloud)* Why are you here?

*Rand.* I have come to take you off.

*Buck.* It is unnecessary. We are high and dry above high-water mark.

*Rand.* But the wind may rise.

*Buck.* The sea is calm enough now.

*Rand.* Calm enough now! But don't deceive yourself. There's a storm brewing for you. If you want to escape it, you must do as I bid you.

## ACT III.

SCENE—*Same as Act I.*

MRS. SCANTLEBURY seated knitting.—*Enter* MRS. FLAMBOYS *from hotel with little basket.*

*Mrs. F.* Oh, Mrs. Scantlebury—I have such news!

*Mrs. Scant.* News, my dear?

*Mrs. F.* Yes; Edith Temple is engaged to Mr. Buckthorpe. *[Sits at table.]*

*Mrs. Scant.* Engaged? How very indelicate!

*Mrs. F.* Indelicate?

*Mrs. Scant.* Certainly. Why, they haven't known each other a week! It's very bad taste.



*Mrs. F.* Oh, yes; they're old friends who were engaged eighteen months ago. It was broken off, and now they've made it up. What *do* you call good taste?

*Mrs. Scant.* Eighteen months? My dear, Mr. Scantlebury knew me thirty-five years before he thought of marrying me. Ah, you may well be surprised, but it's quite true.

*Mrs. F.* Oh, I am not at all surprised.

*Mrs. Scant.* Eh? (*Offended.*)

*Mrs. F.* No doubt he was frightened away by your other admirers.

*Mrs. Scant.* No, my dear. There were crowds of them, but I never kept them in suspense. For thirty-five years I made up my mind to remain single. Young men had only to look at my face, and they saw at once that it was made up.

*Mrs. F.* They would.

*Mrs. Scant.* Yes; there is something in my face that had such an effect on them that, directly they looked at it, they went away, and they never came back again. Now, I call that good taste.

*Mrs. F.* On the part of——

*Mrs. Scant.* Of myself—of course. It's a great mistake to marry too young.

*Mrs. F.* It is indeed. (*Sighing.*) Ah, if I had been a little more like you, Mrs. Scantlebury——

*Mrs. Scant.* If you had been a little more like me, my dear, you would never have been married to Mr. Flamboys.

*Mrs. F.* I'm sure of that, Mrs. Scantlebury.

*Mrs. Scant.* No, no; depend upon it a man makes a great mistake when he marries a young girl who grows older and older every day. In my opinion, a wife should begin as she means to go on. Mr. Buckthorpe marries Edith at her best—Mr. Scantlebury married me at my worst. I shall make a point of cautioning Mr. Buckthorpe.

*Mrs. F.* Cautioning him?

*Mrs. Scant.* Certainly. How does he know what Edith will be at my age? It isn't every woman who preserves her good looks at eight-and-forty. If Mr. Buckthorpe is wise, he'll do as Scantlebury did—he'll wait and see.

[*Exit* MRS. SCANTLEBURY.]

*Mrs. F.* What a dreadful old woman! Well, at all events, Mr. Scantlebury knows the worst. I suppose even they are happy in their odd way! People always are, I suppose, at first. At first! I speak as though such happiness as mine could have an end. Now that I am alone, I can set to work again. (*Proceeds to roll cigarettes.*) Happy cigarettes! your

lives are brief indeed—but then you live through your short span at his lips. I declare I envy you the few moments during which each of you usurps my place!

*Enter FLAMBOYS.*

*Flamb.* My love!

*Mrs. F.* Theodore!

*Flamb.* What are these?

*Mrs. F.* Cigarettes. Pretty things with a pretty name. I declare I'm jealous of them. I wish cigarettes were not feminine.

*Flamb.* Do you think I should let you roll them if they were masculine?

*Mrs. F. (earnestly)* I hope not, dear; I hope you love me far—far too well. I've been at work at them all the morning, and I've made forty-two.

*Flamb.* What an industrious little woman. And whom are they for?

*Mrs. F.* Can't you guess?

*Enter BANGLES.*

*Flamb.* Can't imagine.

*Bang. (coming forward).* Perhaps they are for Mr. Flamboys.

*Mrs. F. (contemptuously).* Mr. Flamboys, indeed!

*Bang.* Surely they are not for yourself.

*Mrs. F.* Really, Mr. Bangles, I hope it's not necessary to assure you that I don't smoke.

*Bang.* Well, let me see, they can't be for Trotway. (*Mrs. FLAMBOYS shakes her head.*) For Randall, then? (*Mrs. FLAMBOYS shakes her head.*) Why, they must be for me!

*Mrs. F. (reluctantly).* Why, of course they must. (*Aside.*) Tiresome old man. (*BANGLES takes them—Mrs. F. to FLAMBOYS.*) Theodore, get them away from him, they are for you. Dearest Theodore, he mustn't have them.

*Flamb.* My love, what can I do? (*Aloud—crossing to BANGLES.*) I say, Bangles, take an old stager's advice, don't you smoke Mrs. Flamboy's cigarettes—they're beastly.

*Bang.* What am I to do? I don't like amateur cigarettes as a rule, but she'll be offended if I refuse them.

*Flamb.* No, no; I'll square her. (*Aloud.*) Mrs. Flamboys, call these cigarettes?—Ridiculous! Come along with me, ma'am, and I'll teach you how to roll cigarettes. Here's a thing! Look at it, ma'am; why, it's back's broken. Examine

it, ma'am; it's a deformity. Taste it, ma'am. (*Puts it in his mouth and lights it.*) It's—it's—it's—oh, it's delicious!

[*Exeunt MR. and MRS. FLAMBOYS.*]

*Bang.* Strange people! They little thought when they married, four years ago, that they were taking a yoke upon their shoulders that would gall them through life. Well, I've steered clear of that sort of thing hitherto, and now I'm going on the rocks in my old age! I'm a wicked old scoundrel to fall in love with a girl of twenty! But she'll never know it—she'll never know it! I've kept it to myself for two years, and I suppose it will die with me. It won't die till then! (*Sits at table.*)

*Enter EDITH.*

*Edith.* Why, you're all alone—where's Miss Spinn?

*Bang.* (*at table*). Washed out to sea, my dear, for anything I know or care.

*Edith.* Do you know I'm very glad to hear you say that? Because people think that—that—

*Bang.* That I intend to marry her?

*Edith.* No, that she intends to marry you—that's worse. Now, I can't allow any one to marry you—because—

*Bang.* Because I'm a confirmed old bachelor, eh, Edith?

*Edith.* Oh, she told you what I said, did she? Yes, because you're a confirmed old bachelor. I should be dreadfully jealous of any one you married. [*Sits on stool at his feet.*]

*Bang.* You would?

*Edith.* Certainly. What would become of me?

*Bang.* Of you?

*Edith.* Yes, of me! Why, I've been your little wife since I was two years old, and do you think I'm going to allow any one else to light your cheroot, or warm your slippers, or nurse you when you are ill. Why, what a wicked old man you must be to think of such a thing!

*Bang.* But I never did think of such a thing, and I never shall think of such a thing.

*Edith.* Never?

*Bang.* Never.

*Edith.* That's all right. Then you see you *are* a confirmed old bachelor after all.

*Bang.* Oh, I didn't say that.

*Edith.* But do say it. Promise me that you will never, never marry. I can't bear to think of you as a married man. Besides you are married already.

*Bang.* Indeed?

*Edith.* Yes, to me.

*Bang.* Then—you will never marry?

*Edith.* Oh, I didn't say that. That's quite a different thing.

*Bang.* But if you are my wife?

*Edith.* Oh yes,—no doubt I am your wife—but then, you see, you are not my husband.

*Bang.* How do you make that out?

*Edith.* Why, in the first place, a husband has black whiskers—now yours are grey.

*Bang.* They were black once.

*Edith.* Dear me! Well, I suppose they were. Now, that's very odd, to think that you once had black whiskers. They've always been grey ever since I can remember, and I never associated them with any other colour. I believe I thought you were born with grey whiskers. It seems so strange to think that you were ever a young man—you are such a thorough old fogey!

*Bang.* I am! A thorough old fogey! A growling, grumbling, discontented old fogey! A bald old fogey! A grey old fogey! A gouty old fogey! I'm a nice sort of fellow to talk of getting married. Married! And in ten years I shan't have a tooth in my head. Married! with an outfit of flannel bandages, silver-gilt crutches, and a cellar of antimonial wine. No, no; Joe Bangles' work is done. Shelve him—superannuate him—lay him up in lavender—he's only in the way. And if he wants to be a family man, let him go a-godfathering. It's all he's fit for now, God help him! it's all he's fit for now!

*[Sits and covers his face with his hands.]*

*Edith* (who has been laughing with Mr. BANGLES through this speech, is alarmed at his emotion). Oh! Mr. Bangles—I hope I haven't vexed you. I can't bear to see you look unhappy—and I am so happy, too!

*Bang.* You?

*Edith.* Yes—I have come to tell you some news. I—I think I am going to be married.

*Bang.* Married—to—to—

*Edith.* To Mr. Buckthorpe. Oh, Mr. Bangles, I'm so happy!

*Bang.* (Aside.) Then it's over. (Aloud.) God bless you, my love! I—I—hope and pray that you may be sincerely happy.

*Edith.* Won't you kiss me?

*Bang.* (kisses her). Buckthorpe is a good fellow—I'm sure of it. I—I—you may not think it, my dear, but I do believe I'm delighted to hear it!

*Enter* BUCKTHORPE.

*Buck.* Thank you, Mr. Bangles—thank you heartily! Edith speaks so kindly—so affectionately—of you!—her heart is so full of the unvarying love you have borne her for eighteen years, that I am overjoyed to think so old and true a friend does not appear displeased at her engagement. [*Exit* EDITH *into* hotel. Yes, Mr. Bangles, I'm going to be married to Edith. And that's not all—the Vice-Chancellor's decision has just been telegraphed to me, and I'm owner in fee of Ardleigh Park, two-thirds of a coal-mine, and thirty-eight thousand pounds consols.

*Bang.* My boy, I don't know much about you—I've only known you a week or so—but you come of a good stock, and I hope and believe you're the hearty, straightforward, manly fellow I take you to be.

*Buck.* Mr. Bangles, I must be candid with you. If I'm a straightforward fellow, my straightforwardness is only a week old.

*Bang.* Eh?

*Buck.* When I came down to Beachington, I was an adventurer.

*Bang.* Confound it, sir! You don't mean to say that that dear girl's money brought you down here?

*Buck.* No—I came down to Beachington not knowing that Edith was here; and when I learnt that she was here, I also learnt that she was penniless.

*Bang.* Penniless! Confound it, sir! It's all very well for a man with a park, a coal mine, and devil knows how many consols, to call Edith penniless; but thirty-eight thousand pounds is a pretty sum, notwithstanding. Your recent good luck has enlarged your views, Mr. Buckthorpe.

*Buck.* Edith has not one penny she can call her own. She does not know this—but I knew it all along. That thief Randall secretly married her great-aunt after the date of the will, and he claims all that she left. There's a warrant against him for forgery, and so he dares not declare himself.

*Bang.* The deuce there is! Let me ask you, sir, if Mr. Randall is a forger, how do you and he come to be together?

*Buck.* Because I am under his thumb. Mr. Bangles, I'll tell you all. Twelve months ago, I killed a man in self-defence. Randall holds evidence which makes my crime look like wilful murder.

*Bang.* Do I understand you to say, sir, that you are an infernal scoundrel?

*Buck.* I ~~don't~~ say that. I've been imprudent—unfortunate—

dissipated ; but I've done nothing to bring me within the grasp of the law.

*Bang.* Hang it, sir, you confessed to having killed this miserable man !

*Buck.* Yes, under circumstances that would have justified an archbishop in killing him.

*Bang.* It may be so, sir, and it may not. Does Dr. Trotway know that you killed this man ?

*Buck.* No ! (*Abashed.*)

*Bang.* Does Edith know it ?

*Buck.* No !

*Bang.* Then, sir, I shall consider it my duty, sir, to place them in possession of all the facts.

*Bang.* I have no wish to deal hardly, sir, with a young man who, having fallen, through his own weakness, is struggling to right himself in the world's opinion and his own. But in this charge that hangs over you the question of weakness does not arise. Either you murdered this man, or you did not. And I tell you this frankly—if you murdered him, I'll hang you !

*Buck.* Mr. Bangles, let me tell you this—if this accusation reaches Edith's ears, whether I am guilty or whether I am innocent, I am lost beyond redemption.

*Bang.* Come, sir, I'll make a bargain with you. I'll tackle this fellow Randall myself. I think I know how to deal with him. If I see reason to be satisfied that his charge is a true one, I give you up to justice. If I have reason to believe it is false, I place no obstacle in the way of your marriage ; and if you knew all that I could tell you, you would give me credit for some forbearance in making this promise.

*Buck.* But by what means—

*Bang.* Leave the means to me. I think I see my way to the end I propose to accomplish. If you are innocent your innocence will appear.

*Buck.* Mr. Bangles, will you shake hands with me ?

*Dang.* Sir, I would rather postpone that ceremony until I have put my plan into operation. Here comes that unspeakable scoundrel Randall. Be good enough to leave me to deal with him. (*Exit BUCKTHORPE*). Here's a devil of a business. If I tell Trotway, as I'm bound in honour and in duty to do, and the charge turns out to be false, it will appear as though I were taking a dastardly revenge on a man who has cut me out. If I let the matter rest, I allow Edith to marry an admitted *roué* and a possible murderer !

*Enter RANDALL from hotel.*

*Bang.* Now, sir. It appears by all accounts that you are an infernal villain.

*Rand.* You're very good. [*Crosses to R.*]

*Bang.* I've just learnt from Mr. Buckthorpe that there is a warrant out for his apprehension on what he describes as a false charge of murder; and that you hold the means of bringing him to justice.

*Rand.* Did he tell you that?

*Bang.* He did. Now, sir, Mr. Buckthorpe may be guilty or he may be innocent. If he is guilty he ought to be hanged. If he is innocent you ought to be transported. Now one or other of those events I propose to bring about.

*Rand.* You will take your own course, but what the deuce has it to do with you?

*Bang.* I'll tell you what it has to do with me. You state that you know of your own knowledge that he is guilty?

*Rand.* Undoubtedly.

*Bang.* Then if you don't act upon that knowledge you are an accomplice after the fact. I shall detain you here while information is given to the police, and I shall give you both into their custody when they arrive.

*Rand.* What! (*Aside.*) Devil take him; that won't do. They'll spot me as the Rum Customer directly. (*Aloud with much agitation.*) Mr. Bangles, I am a man of the world. I don't want to hang this poor devil, Buckthorpe, if I can help it. He doesn't deserve any pity, but I can't help pitying him. I'm an infernal tender-hearted old lamb, I know; but still I can't help it. But, look here, if you insist upon it, I'll go and lay information myself—there! [*Going.*]

*Bang.* Stop! I shan't let you leave this hotel.

*Rand.* By what right do you propose to stop me?

*Bang.* By no right at all—by main force.

*Rand.* I'll try that.

*Bang.* Stop! You see this gong? (*Going to gong at entrance of hotel.*) If you take one step further in that direction, I'll call every man in the house to my assistance, and I will denounce you as a murderer's accomplice! Now then, one step, and—

*Rand.* What do you want me to do?

*Bang.* Write a note to the superintendent here, and send it by a porter. Yes or no? Come, one, two, three!

[*Preparing to strike.*]

*Rand.* Stop! What am I to write?

*Bang.* This. (*RANDALL sits down to write at table.*) "To the Superintendent, Beachington Police Station. Sir,—A notorious criminal, a warrant for whose arrest is out——"

*Rand.* But——

*Bang.* Ah, would you? (*Prepares to strike gong.*) "Is staying at this hotel. Send a sergeant and two strong men, and I will give him into custody." Sign it.

*Rand.* Wouldn't it be better if you signed it?

*Bang.* No, no—I wouldn't deprive you of the three hundred pounds reward, on any account. (*RANDALL signs it.*) "Postscript—Let the two men be very strong."

*Rand.* I say——

*Bang.* Ah, would you? (*About to strike gong—RANDALL finishes note—BANGLE takes note, and reads.*) Very good. Now direct it to the Superintendent. (*RANDALL does so.*) Good. Waiter!

*Enter CUMMING, from hotel.*

*Bang.* Take this note to the police station directly.

[*RANDALL folds another piece of paper, aside.*

*Cumming.* Police station, sir?

*Rand.* Immediately. There's no answer.

*Bang.* Oh, yes—there is. A sergeant and two strong men. Bring them here with you. [*CUMMING going.*

*Rand.* Stop! Hadn't I better direct it to the Superintendent by name? I happen to know his name. [*Takes note back.*

*Bang.* No doubt you do.

[*RANDALL writes address on blank note, and hands it to CUMMING, retaining the note first written.*

*Rand.* There—that's better.

*Bang.* (*intercepting the note*). Allow me. (*Reads.*) "To Mr. Superintendent Clench." Much better.

*Rand.* More regular, you know.

*Bang.* Much more regular. (*Opens it deliberately—RANDALL very uneasy.*) Bless me! How very odd! The writing has disappeared! Blank paper!

*Rand.* Dear me! That's very strange.

*Bang.* Very strange, indeed.

*Rand.* These mistakes will happen.

*Bang.* No doubt. Ha, ha!

*Rand.* Ha, ha!

[*Uneasily.*  
*Bang.* Come, Mr. Randall—in the confusion of the moment you changed the papers. Oblige me with the original document.



*Rand.* Exactly. In the hurry of business, I—that's it. Confound you!

*Bang.* Thank you. *(Gives it to CUMMING—returning blank note to RANDALL.)* Allow me. Now, Mr. Randall, you are free to go. *[Exit CUMMING.]*

*Rand.* To go where I please?

*Bang.* To go where you please.

*Rand.* Right away?

*Bang.* Right away!

*Rand. (aside).* In ten minutes the express starts for London. I can pack in two, and reach the station in five. Bangles, you're a muff! *[Exit into hotel.]*

*Enter BUCKTHORPE.*

*Bang.* Well, sir, I've done it.

*Buck.* Done what?

*Bang.* Laid information. Mr. Buckthorpe, I don't mind owning to you that my impression is that you're a bit of a scamp, but that you're not guilty of this murder. You told me there was a warrant out for Randall's arrest for forgery. I've made him write a note to the Superintendent to the effect that a notorious criminal is staying here, but I haven't said who the criminal is, or what he's charged with. Now, if he knows you to be guilty of this murder, he'll give you into custody, and you'll be hanged, and serve you right. If he knows you to be innocent, he'll be off and away before the officers arrive, for fear that he should be arrested on a charge of forgery. Now, sir, you stand on your own deliverance; and—hang it—which-ever way it goes, I shall be perfectly satisfied! *[Exit.]*

*Buck. (sinks into a chair).* So, the end is at hand, and in a few minutes I shall know the worst. Well, it is better that it should be so, than that I should drag on a miserable existence under the shadow of that cursed scoundrel's ban! Here he comes.

*Enter RANDALL, with portmanteau and travelling rug, from hotel.*

He's going, and I am saved! *(To RANDALL, with forced calmness.)* Why, what's this? You don't mean to say you're going to leave us?

*Rand.* Yes.

*Buck.* This is rather sudden, isn't it?

*Rand.* It is sudden.

*Buck.* Pressing business?

*Rand.* Very.

*Buck.* Can I have a word or two with you before you go?

*Rand.* No.

*Buck.* Must catch the express?

*Rand.* Yes.

[*Going.*

*Buck.* Then you've thought better of your threat?

*Rand.* For the present.

*Buck.* For the present?

*Rand.* Yes; until you're married. \* Then, look out! Good morning.

[*Going.*

*Enter WAITER from hotel.*

*Waiter.* Beg pardon, sir. I took your cheque to master. He says—very sorry, sir, but he says he can't take a cheque in payment of your bill.

*Rand.* Why, he knows me.

*Waiter.* Yes, sir—that's it—he *knows* you. He says—beg pardon, sir—but he says he thinks there would be a difficulty at the bank.

*Rand.* Nonsense—absurd.

[*Going.*

*Waiter.* Beg pardon, sir, but I can't let you go.

*Rand.* (*violently*). Stand away, and let me pass.

*Waiter.* Bless you, sir, I'm not afraid of *you*. My impression is you're like your portmanteau. (*Taking it.*) Very big to look at, but—(*shaking it*)—very little in you.

[*WAITER sits on portmanteau at the back.*

*Rand.* Buckthorpe, if you'll give me a cheque for three hundred pounds, and five pounds down, I'll give up those letters.

*Buck.* The deuce you will? Why, you'll get that sum from the Home Office?

*Rand.* Yes, but I want to go.

*Buck.* But you've laid information against me—they'll want your evidence.

*Rand.* No, I don't want to be hard on you—I'll let you off at cost price.

*Buck.* Can't you do it under that—for a friend, you know?

*Rand* (*aside*). They'll be here in five minutes, and I shall be nabbed. (*Aloud.*) Say a hundred pounds and a fiver down, and the letters are yours.

*Buck.* Suppose we say the fiver without the hundred pounds?

*Rand* (*in desperation*). Done—here are the letters—give me the money. (*Looks at watch.*) In the devil's name, man, be quick, or it will be too late. They are right enough.

*Buck.* One moment. I don't doubt your word, but I would rather see that they are all here.

[*Opens them, and counts them very deliberately.*]

*Rand.* There are six of them—four from Dijon, and two from St. Valerie. Look sharp!

*Buck.* Quite right.

*Rand.* Come, the money. 'Don't put me in a hole—I've acted straightforwardly in this matter, at all events.

*Buck.* You have; I congratulate you. How do you feel after it?

*Rand.* Give me the money, man, in the devil's name——

*Buck.* There it is, Mr. Randall. (*Gives notes.*) Why, how your hand shakes.

*Rand.* (to CUMMING). Give that note to your master. [*Going.*]

*Cumming.* There's ten shillings change, sir.

*Rand.* Keep the change. Poor devil, you look as if you wanted it! Off at last!

*Buck.* Don't go, Randall.

*Rand.* Why not?

*Buck.* Because I'm going to detain you on a charge of forgery.

*Rand.* The devil you are! What do you know about that charge?

*Buck.* Nothing, except that you're wanted for it. [*Holds him.*]

*Rand.* And do you think I can't break away from you?

*Buck.* On the contrary, I think you can; but I don't think you've the pluck to try. (RANDALL much disconcerted.) Why, you haven't! Why, you trembling cur, you dare not move an inch when a man's hand is on your throat.

*Rand.* Don't be a fool! You've got your letters—let me go.

*Buck.* Let you go? You—who have held an unfounded charge over me for eighteen months?—you, who have used that charge to wring from me the miserable remnant of my shattered fortune!—you, who have used that charge to foist your cursed company on me for eighteen months!—you, who have used that charge to pull me down when I was falling, and to keep me down when I might have risen! No, no, Randall—my turn's come!

[RANDALL struggles furiously to release himself—BUCK—THORPE forces him into a chair, and places his hand on RANDALL'S throat.]

*Buck.* Lie still, you cur!—lie still!—or, by heaven, I'll choke the life out of you!

*Rand.* Help, help! He'll murder me! Help, help!

*Enter BANGLES and TROTWAY from hotel—they seize RANDALL.*

*Iland.* Here, Bangles—Trotway—take this fellow off! He's a murderer! I denounce him!—seize him!—he has letters in his pocket at this moment that suffice to hang him half-a-dozen times over. Don't let him destroy them!—he will if he can.

*Buck.* I have no intention of destroying them. They are here. *(Places them in TROTWAY'S hands.)* Dr. Trotway, I might have destroyed those letters five minutes ago, but I have preserved them, in order that you might know the full truth about this miserable business.

*Trot.* Mr. Buckthorpe, Mr. Bangles has told me all. I need not tell you that the truth of your story must be established before you are allowed to see my niece again.

*Bang.* *(to BUCKTHORPE.)* I say, you sir!

*Buck.* Yes.

*Bang.* When did this so-called murder take place?

*Buck.* On the 14th August, 1869.

*Bang.* You were attacked in the dark by a man in the prime of life, and you defended yourself with a swordstick?

*Buck.* Yes, yes!

*Bang.* *(crossing to BUCKTHORPE.)* You ran your adversary through the neck?

*Buck.* Yes.

*Bang.* Just—just here? *[Showing a scar on his neck.]*

*Buck.* Yes.

*Bang.* And hang it, sir, do you mean to say that a coroner's jury ever sat on me?

*All.* On you?

*Bang.* Yes, on me, sir—on me!

*Buck.* But it was Peters—a commercial traveller.

*Bang.* Peters be hanged, sir! It was I. I think I ought to know.

*Buck.* Then you didn't die?

*Bang.* Die! Who the devil says I'm dead? Do I look like a dead man? Did you ever see anybody look more like a live man? I'm good for a great many years yet, sir—a great many years yet!

*Trot.* But the coroner's jury—

*Bang* *(turning round suddenly.)* Coroner's jury, sir! No coroner's jury ever sat on me! *(To BUCKTHORPE, in a furious rage.)* Why, confound you, sir—how dare you? Who the deuce are you, sir, that you consider yourself justified in spreading such a report? What do you mean by it? Hang it, sir, explain yourself!

*Buck.* But Randall told me that a jury had set on the body, and returned a verdict of wilful murder against some person or persons unknown.

*Bang.* Oh! Randall told you! Do you mean to say you are such an infernal fool as to believe a word that fellows tells you?

*Rand.* Let me tell you, sir—

*Bang.* (*Crossing to RANDALL.*) Let me tell you, sir, that you're a miserable impostor! Let me tell you, sir, that when you say my name's Peters, and that I'm a confounded bagman, you tell a group of lies, sir—a group of lies. And when you say that I'm dead, and that a coroner's jury ever sat on me, you anticipate matters by a great many years, sir—a great many years!

*Trot.* But how did you escape?

*Bang.* Escape? I tumbled over the cliff, and was caught—never mind how, sir—in a most ignominious manner, halfway down, sir—halfway down. I had attacked the wrong man. I mistook him for a fellow who had robbed me, and I got the worst of it, and serve me devilish well right! I found out my mistake, and as I was all in the wrong, and as I had to sail for India next morning, and as the wound was only a flesh wound, why—I plastered it up, and joined my ship.

*Trot.* Buckthorpe, forgive me. My dear Joe (*to BANGLES*) you have made us all extremely happy!

*Bang.* Made you all extremely happy! I've made myself confoundedly miserable. If I had been killed right off. Buckthorpe might have been tried for murder, and I might have married Edith and been happy for the rest of my life! (*To BUCKTHORPE*) Now, sir, if you will allow me, I shall have a melancholy pleasure in shaking your hand. [*He does so.*]

*Enter SERGEANT and CUMMING.*

*Sergeant.* (*to RANDALL.*) Beg pardon, sir! Are you the gent. that wrote this note?

*Rand.* Eh—yes!

*Serg.* Well, here we are, sir. What can we do for you. I suppose your information's along of Bill Burke, *alias* the Rum Customer. We've got information that he's somewhere hereabouts.

*Buck.* Burke! That's an *alias* of Randall's! Sergeant, that's your man!

*Serg.* Eh? Oh, I see! (*Removes RANDALL's wig and beard.*) Lor'! So it is! William Burke, I arrest you on

a charge of forgery! Here's my warrant. Much obliged to you for sending for me, sir. Lor' bless you, I should never have known you!

*Cumming* (to RANDALL). Beg pardon, sir! Here's your change. Poor devil! You look as if you wanted it.

[*Gives half-sovereign and exit.*]

*Rand.* Done! But my game's not up yet. Buckthorpe, I've another card to play, as you know. Edith Temple hasn't a penny. I married her great-aunt, after the date of the will under which she takes her fortune. Here's a copy of the certificate.

[*Gives paper to TROTWAY.*]

*Serg.* It won't do you much good, my man, seeing it's fifteen thousand to one you get a lifer.

*Enter MISS SPINN and EDITH from hotel.*

*Rand.* It'll do me this good—that that girl's penniless. It's the only revenge in my power, and by heaven I'll take it!

*Trot. (reads).* "John Randall to Penelope Brackenbury."

*Miss S.* Penelope Brackenbury? An old woman of seventy?

*Trot.* Yes.

*Miss S.* Married in this parish two years ago?

*Trot.* Yes, so it seems.

*Miss S.* Tall stout old lady—dropped her h's--swore a good deal.

*Trot.* Oh, dear no! A little wizened old lady of singularly refined manners, and of a remarkably serious turn.

*Miss S.* Didn't she drink?

*Edith.* Aunt Penelope drink? Why, she was the quietest and dearest old lady in the world! Stop, here's her portrait!

[*Shows portrait.*]

*Miss S.* Oh, dear me, this isn't Miss Penelope Brackenbury—at least not the Penelope Brackenbury who was married at Saint Jude's in this parish. I remember her well, she lodged at my house two days before her marriage with a tall man with a bald head. Why, (sees RANDALL) there he is!

[*Crossing to RANDALL,*]

*Serg.* John Randall, alias Bill Burke, alias the Rum Customer, in custody on a charge of forgery.

*Miss S.* Well, upon my word! I always thought those whiskers were too good to be true. Do you mean to say you married this lady?

[*Shows portrait.*]

*Rand.* How do you know I did not?

*Miss S.* How do I know? Because—because—well, I'm not ashamed to own it—I've been a good many things in my time,

and a pew-opener among others; and I witnessed the marriage, and here's my signature—and I don't care who knows it—there! Others have fallen lower and risen higher afterwards, and I may do so too—there!

*Rand.* And do you remember me?

*Miss S.* Yes, I do remember you; I've good cause to, for you gave me half-a-crown and it was a bad one. Bless you all, it was a vamped-up marriage! He bribed some old thief, whose age corresponded with Miss Brackenbury's, to assume her name and description, and they went through the form of marriage, with a view to getting hold of her money after her death. Bless you—it's done every day.

*Bang.* Adelaide Spinn, you're a trump after all! and, if you'll allow me, I'll—hang it!—I'll kiss you!

[Crosses to MISS SPINN.

*Miss S.* Allow you, Joseph?—why, of course I will! There! (He kisses her.) That's the first of a great, great many to come.

*Bang.* (After a pause.) Well, upon my life, Adelaide, I believe it is. [They retire up.

*Enter MR. and MRS. SCANTLEBURY.*

*Mrs. Scant.* Hey? What? Policemen? Heavens, what are they here for?

*Serg.* We've come to walk one of your party, ma'am. Serious charge—forgery!

*Mrs. Scant.* Forgery! Who is it? Scantlebury, what have you been about?

*Scant.* My love, I've done plenty of foolish things in my life, but I never was a thief.

*Mrs. Scant.* (slily.) Not when you stole my heart?

*Scant.* My own!

*Mrs. Scant.* My love! (they embrace.) Don't mind us, Mr. Policeman, we are so happy together!

*Enter MR. and MRS. FLAMBOYS.*

*Flamb.* Oh, go on, it won't last—bride and bridegroom—old story! Take an old stager's advice, and make your hay while the sun shines.

*Mrs. F.* "Ah, me, how heedless of their fate, the little lambkins play!" Ah! make the most of Mr. Scantlebury while you can—you'll be heartily tired of each other in five years. [Gives parcel, wrapped up in a newspaper, to MISS SPINN.

*Scant.* Five years! We hadn't so much as a squabble for the first fifteen.

*Trot.* Fifteen! I thought you had only been married three weeks!

*Scant.* Three weeks? Nonsense—away, deception! Thirty-five years.

*Mrs. Scant.* It has seemed like three weeks, hasn't it Scantlebury?

*Scant.* My own!

*Mrs. Scant.* My love!

*Both.* Ugh!

*Miss S. (coming forward with parcel).* Bless me! How very odd!

*All.* What's the matter?

*Miss S. (reads from the newspaper cover)* "On the 19th instant, at Trinity Church, Paddington, by the Reverend Reginald Reredos, Theodore Flamboys, Esq., to Augusta, only daughter of Caleb Walker, of Jamaica, West Indies."

*Trot.* Why, you young rascal, I thought you had been married five years.

*Flamb. (very much confused).* It has seemed like five years, hasn't it, Augusta!

*Mrs. Scant.* Then George, and Thomas, and William, and John—

*Scant.* And Jane, and Emma, and Mary, and Kate—

*Flamb. (to SCANTLEBURY.)* Some day.

*Buck. (Seated with EDITH on bench at back of stage.)*

So Friday's enemies at last are gone,  
And Friday owes his life to Robinson  
In gratitude to Robinson he'll bend  
True, faithful, and submissive to the end.

*Edith.* Will Friday always, always be the same?

*Buck.* Even when Robinson has changed her name;  
The only change that we shall undergo.

*Edith.* No, you must change *your* name.

*Buck.* Indeed! How so?

*Edith.* From that day forth—that happy, happy high day,  
You shall be Robinson and I'll be Friday!





# THE FORTUNE-HUNTER.

*AN ORIGINAL PLAY*

IN THREE ACTS.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE DUKE OF DUNDEE, *an octogenarian Peer.*  
SIR CUTHBERT JAMESON, *a middle-aged Baronet.*  
MARQUIS DE BRÉVILLE.  
VICOMTE ARMAND DE BRÉVILLE, *his Son.*  
M. LACHAUD, *a French Avocat.*  
MR. DUDLEY COXE-COXE, *on his travels.*  
MR. BARKER, *the Duke's Courier.*  
MR. TAYLOR, *the Duke's Valet.*  
M. PAILLARD, *a French Money-lender.*  
MR. MACQUARRIE, *Purser of P. and O. ss. "Africa."*  
POLLARD, *a Detective.*  
CAPTAIN MUNRO, *of the steam yacht "Flying Eagle."*  
MR. MCFIE, *the Duchess of Dundee's Secretary.*  
QUARTERMASTER, *P. and O. ss. "Africa."*  
SERVANTS.  
THE DUCHESS OF DUNDEE, *née Euphemia S. Van Zyl, of Chicago.*  
THE MARQUISE DE BRÉVILLE, *Armand's Mother.*  
DIANA CAVEREL, *an Australian Heiress.*  
MRS. DUDLEY COXE-COXE, *on her travels.*  
MISS SOMERTON, *Passenger, P. and O. ss. "Africa."*  
MISS BAILEY, *the Duchess's Maid.*  
*Passengers, Sailors, Lascars, &c.*

### ACT I.

#### PORT SAID.

*Quarter-deck of P. and O. ss. "Africa."*  
*Twelve months elapse between Acts I. and II.*

### ACT II.

#### PARIS.

*(Vicomte de Bréville's Residence in the Champs Elysées).*  
*Eight months elapse between Acts II. and III.*

### ACT III.

#### MONTE CARLO.

*Library in the Duchess's Villa.*

**NOTE.**—By the 183rd Article of the *Code Civile* a Frenchman who is under the age of twenty-five CANNOT LEGALLY CONTRACT MARRIAGE UNLESS HE HAS OBTAINED THE CONSENT OF HIS PARENTS IF THEY BE LIVING. If, dispensing with this consent, he should go through the form of marriage, that marriage may be attacked by his parents or by himself. It is open to his parents to give a post-nuptial consent to such a marriage, but he is not bound by such consent, and is entitled nevertheless to apply to the Courts for a decree of nullity on his own responsibility.

# THE FORTUNE-HUNTER.

## ACT I.

WOOD.

SCENE.—Quarter-deck of P. and O. ship "Africa" (starboard side), looking aft. Deck cabins L. Bulwarks R. Saloon skylight up L. Awning overhead. The ship is at anchor at Port Said. Chairs ranged on deck. Afternoon.

MR. and MRS. DUDLEY COXE-COXE, MISS SOMERTON and other passengers discovered grouped in a semi-circle round SIR CUTHBERT JAMESON and the VICOMTE DE BRÉVILLE, who are entertaining the group with a fencing bout. After a few passes, SIR CUTHBERT hits DE BRÉVILLE over the heart. Applause from passengers.

De B. Good! Again you have pinked me! And precisely on the same spot! Once more.

[They resume. After a few passes, SIR CUTHBERT hits DE BRÉVILLE as before.

De B. Five times in succession! I give in. It is impossible to stand up to you. It is absolutely incomprehensible to me. I am not unskilled in fence, yet every time you hit me on exactly the same spot!

Sir C. It's very simple—a mere trick. See!

[They cross foils again, and with the same result. Applause from spectators.

De B. A trick? Yes! But when you hold all the trumps, tricks are easy to make.

Sir C. Let's try again. "Spot barred," if you like.

De B. No, no! Enough for the moment. We Frenchmen rather pride ourselves on our skill with the foils, but I must take off my mask to *you*, my dear Cuthbert, I must indeed. (To spectators.) Ladies and gentlemen, you see a vanquished Frenchman!

[They both remove their masks. DE BRÉVILLE hands his mask and foil to SIR CUTHBERT, takes off his fencing jacket, and puts on his coat.

*Sir C. (taking the mask and foil).* I learnt the trick of Jules Javot, *maître d'armes* to the 10th Cuirassiers, thirty years ago. Poor fellow, he was knocked over in one of the battles round Metz and his skull cracked with a drum-major's staff. No one is skilled with all weapons. \*

*De B.* Ah! I was sure France had something to do with it. (*To spectators.*) Ladies and gentlemen, when you think lightly of the Vicomte de Bréville, remember Drum-major Jules Javot. But, Cuthbert, you must teach me the trick, some day. Eh? Will you not?

*Sir C.* With pleasure, when we meet in England. The trick's easy enough when you've got the hang of it. (*Bell.*) Ah! the dressing bell. You leave us to-night, but I shall see you before you go.

[*Exit down companion, followed by all the passengers except MR. and MRS. DUDLEY COXE-COXE and MISS SOMERTON.*]

*Miss Som.* Never mind, M. de Bréville. If Sir Cuthbert has the best of you with the foils, you beat him out and out with the rifle.

*De B.* Yes, I believe I have a little the best of him with the rifle.

*Mrs. Coxe.* Is it true that you once saved his life when he was tiger shooting in India?

*De B.* Ah! pardon. It was the other way—he saved mine. A magnificent tiger held me under his claws when Sir Cuthbert dropped a bullet into his ear just as he was about to begin on my right arm. It was my very narrowest escape!

*Mrs. Coxe.* You must be a very brave man, M. de Bréville, to care so little for tigers.

*De B.* Ah, but you mistake, Mrs. Coxe-Coxe. I care a great deal for tigers! Do you think that when I am face to face with a man-eater I am not frightened? My dear lady, I have killed twenty-three tigers, and each tiger has terrified me beyond expression.

*Miss Som.* But when one is terrified one runs away.

*De B.* Not from a tiger, for to run away from a tiger is death. Frankly, I have not the courage to run away from a tiger. I prefer to stay and put a ball into him—not because I am brave, but because I am afraid to run away.

*Mr. Coxe.* How did you come to take to tiger-shooting? It's not the sort of fun that most Frenchmen care about.

*De B.* Most Frenchmen? No—nor most Englishmen, my good Mr. Coxe-Coxe. It is an acquired taste, and one must have the chance to acquire it. But, given that chance, in the

desire not to be killed, your Frenchman and your Englishman are of one mind. So your Frenchman and your Englishman are equally disinclined to run away, when running away means certain death. By the way, have the Duke and Duchess of Dundee come on board yet?

*Mrs. Coxe.* No, but their luggage has. They are coming off in the harbour-master's launch. Did you happen to meet the Duchess when you were in the States? They say that she rose from nothing at all.

*De B.* Yes—when I was Attaché at Washington, I had the honour of meeting her Grace many times. But she was not her grace then—she was Miss Euphemia S. Van Zyl, the charming millionaire orphan of absolutely self-made parents. Her father, who was an aristocrat in pork, died, having made a vast fortune, every penny of which—ten millions of dollars—he bequeathed to her.

*Little Girl.* Ten millions of dollars! If I had ten millions of dollars, I wonder what I would buy with it?

*De B.* My dear child, if you were a grown-up young American lady, you would buy with it exactly what Miss Van Zyl bought with it—you would buy an old, old English Duke.

*Little Girl (puzzled).* A doll-Duke?

*De B.* Well, yes—a doll-Duke. And you would nurse your poor old doll-Duke as she nurses him—you would be kind to him, and you would be very careful not to break him—and when your poor old doll-Duke fell to pieces you would renounce dolls for ever, for by that time you would be a very great lady, and very great ladies do not nurse dolls if they can help it.

*Miss Som.* And you are really leaving us to-day?

*De B.* Yes, alas! My luggage is already on board the "Cleopatra," and I sail for Athens in an hour!

*Mrs. Coxe.* We shall miss you terribly, M. de Bréville!

*De B.* Ah, Mrs. Coxe-Coxe, you are so good! To me it will be like going from one planet to another, and this has been such a delightful planet. After you, Miss Somerton.

[MISS SOMERTON AND DE BRÉVILLE go down companion.

MR. and MRS. DUDLEY COXE-COXE remain on deck.]

*Mr. Coxe.* Do you know, Godiva, I'm quite glad that we are going to travel with a live Duke and Duchess.

*Mrs. Coxe.* My dear Dudley, what an extraordinary speech! What in the world are the Duke and Duchess to us?

*Mr. Coxe.* Absolutely nothing—except for the amusement they will indirectly afford us.

*Mrs. Coxe.* Oh, from *that* point of view I admit they have their value.

*Mr. Coxe.* My dear Godiva, these enormous swells exist in an atmosphere of perpetual comedy. *They* don't see it, poor devils! they think it's all right enough—but to the independent on-looker, who doesn't care a fig for these tinpot distinctions, the comedy is delightful. It will be interesting to watch the effect produced by these pompous nobodies upon the tuppenny-ha'penny K.C.S.I.s, the cheap colonels, the seedy subalterns, the bumptious globe-trotters, that crowd this quarter-deck. It will give us matter to moralize upon for a month!

*Mrs. Coxe.* And the woman-folk of these gentry! How they will scheme and manœuvre, and plot and plan to get a little notice—if it's only a morning nod—from the great people!

*Mr. Coxe.* How the Duke's babbling commonplaces will be passed from mouth to mouth as miracles of satirical observation!

*Mrs. Coxe.* And his wife's gaudy American taste eulogized for its chaste but daring originality! Ah, my dear Dudley, there are sad snobs in this world!

*Mr. Coxe.* Well, it's ungrate—— (*Rises.*) Hallo!

*Mrs. Coxe.* What's the matter?

*Mr. Coxe (impressed).* I believe I've been sitting on the Duke's chair!

*Mrs. Coxe (awe-struck).* No!

*Mr. Coxe.* I do believe I have! (*Looks at card on back of chair.*) I have! It's the Duke's own chair!

*Mrs. Coxe (delighted).* Dudley!

*Mr. Coxe (patting the seat).* It doesn't look new. I wonder if he's sat on it much—and, by Jove! Godiva——

*Mrs. Coxe.* What—what?

*Mr. Coxe.* You've been actually sitting on the Duchess's!

*Mrs. Coxe.* So I have! Oh, Dudley. (*Dusts it with her pocket-handkerchief.*) It's very like other people's chairs!

*Mr. Coxe (having recovered himself).* Why, of course it is. You don't suppose that these people travel with ducal thrones, do you? But they're wiser than we are in one thing—they've taken care to have them placed on the cool side of the deck.

*Mrs. Coxe.* Yes; it's dreadfully hot on the port side—one gets all the afternoon sun. I think I should like *my* chair on this side. Will you tell the quartermaster?

*Mr. Coxe.* Quartermaster! (*Sailor appears.*) Just bring Mrs. Coxe's chair here—you'll find it between those of Sir Cuthbert Jameson and Lord Frederick Foley. (*Exit QUARTERMASTER.*) By Jove, I see the harbour-master's launch! They are coming! I don't like that hat, Godiva—haven't you another?

*Mrs. Coxe.* Plenty. Shall I wear the white felt with the strawberry leaves?

*Mr. Coxe.* The strawberry leaves by all means! Nothing could be better. Don't be long.

*Mrs. Coxe.* I won't be a minute. (*Exit down companion.*)

*Mr. Coxe.* Shall I be smoking? No. And yet one looks more at one's ease with something in one's mouth. Not a cigar, though (*throwing away cigar*)—a cigarette is better form. (*Lights one.*) And yet I don't know—perhaps the Duchess doesn't like tobacco. Stop! I'll light it and throw it away when she sees me. It's just as well to let these tuppenny swells see that one is accustomed to the habits of refined society.

*Enter QUARTERMASTER with chair.*

*Quar.* Where will you have it, sir?

*Mr. Coxe.* Oh, put it down anywhere. (*Pointing to vacant space next the DUKE's chair.*)—Here, there's just room.

*Quar. (with bated breath).* That's the Duke's chair, sir.

*Mr. Coxe (angrily).* The Duke's chair, sir? Well, sir, what the deuce is the Duke to me? Damn the Duke, sir!—put it where I tell you! Deck's as much mine as his! (*Quartermaster places chair as directed and exit.*) Upon my word, the snobbishness of people is perfectly sickening! (*COXE places DUKE and DUCHESS's chair close to his own.*) It's enough to turn a fellow into an infernal Radical! (*Sees BARKER coming up gangway. He mistakes him for the DUKE.*) Oh, here comes the Duke—now for it! (*Strolls up and off.*)

*Enter from gangway louder MR. BARKER, the DUKE's courier, and MISS BAILEY, the DUCHESS's maid.*

*Barker (to officer on gangway).* Purser about?

*Officer.* The Purser's coming. There he is.

*Enter PURSER.*

*Purser.* What is it?

*Bar.* I am Mr. Barker, his Grace's courier, and this lady is Miss Bailey, her Grace's maid. We have four deck cabins, I believe?

*Pur.* Yes; these two starboard cabins are for the Duke and Duchess—your cabins are immediately adjoining on the other side.

*Bar.* Oh! The luggage was brought on board this morning by Mr. Taylor, his Grace's valet.

*Pur.* Quite right. You'll share the after port cabin with him—you'll find him unpacking in the Duke's state room, I believe.

(*MISS BAILEY enters DUCHESS's cabin.*)

*Bar.* But stop! I am accustomed to have a cabin to myself.



*Pur.* Are you? Well, you won't have one this voyage—we're full up. When do the Duke and Duchess come on board? We get under weigh in half an hour.

*Bar.* The launch is going back for them. I suppose you'll be here to receive them?

*Pur.* No—I don't think that will be necessary. If the Duke wants me he can send for me. I shall be in my office. [*Exit.*]

*Bar.* Cool hands these merchant fellows, upon my honour! Start in half an hour, do they? Not before *we* come on board, I fancy. (*Arranging chairs.*) Whose chair's this? (*Reads.*) Mr. Dudley Coxe-Coxe. Now, who the deuce is Mr. Dudley Coxe-Coxe?

[*Coxe has strolled down.*]

*Mr. Coxe (with great deference).* I beg your pardon——

*Bar.* Eh?

*Mr. Coxe.* You were good enough to mention my name, I think?

*Bar.* Oh, you're Mr. Coxe. Yes. I read it off your chair. You'll be rather in our way here, I fancy. Would it be troubling you too much to——

*Mr. Coxe.* Oh, remove it at once—pray permit me—quarter-master placed it there. (*Removing it.*) Charming weather.

[*BARKER throws away cigarette end. COXE picks it up, while BARKER is arranging rugs on chair, and puts it in his own case.*]

*Bar.* Yes—smart breeze outside though.

*Mr. Coxe.* Is there? You yacht a good deal, I believe?

*Bar.* Yes—we usually winter in the Mediterranean; but this year we went up the Nile to Wady Halfa.

*Mr. Coxe.* Indeed! How awfully good of you—I mean that must have been very pleasant. By the way, I trust my cigarette is not disagreeable to you? If so, I'll——

*Bar.* Not a bit. I'll join you. May I ask you for one? I've mislaid my case.

*Mr. Coxe (effusively).* With the very greatest pleasure. Pray permit me.

[*Coxe offers cigarette case. BARKER picks out cigarette end.*]

*Bar.* Hallo! Why, I just threw this away!

*Mr. Coxe (confused).* Oh, I beg your pardon. I'm—I'm collecting cigarette ends!

*Bar.* Curious hobby! Come from far?

*Mr. Coxe.* Calcutta. By the way, we travelled across India with the Viceroy.

*Bar.* Oh, Elliston?

*Mr. Coxe.* Yes, Elliston. You know him, of course?

*Bar.* Know him? 'Rather! Travelled all over Europe with him a couple of years ago. Quaint old fellow.

*Mr. Coxe.* Most quaint—most charming—most delightful. So frank and open-handed.

*Bar.* (*doubtfully*). Humph! 'Close-fisted old chap, I should say.

*Mr. Coxe.* Curiously close-fisted. Never knew a more close-fisted man. He was travelling with the Marquis of Samborough.

*Bar.* Ah! Good fellow, Samborough. Pretty daughters, too—especially Lady Arabella. Sad business her marriage.

*Mr. Coxe.* Awful—frightful—deplorable.

*Bar.* Turned out well, though, eventually.

*Mr. Coxe.* Turned out splendidly—magnificently—eventually. You—you are bound for Brindisi, I understand?

*Bar.* Yes—*en route* for Monte Carlo, where we spend a fortnight at our villa. Wish we could make it longer, for I always pull off a pot of money at the tables.

*Mr. Coxe.* Really! It's all luck, I suppose?

*Bar.* Not altogether. If the tables are properly worked, luck simply influences the sum of the gains.

*Mr. Coxe.* Properly worked?

*Bar.* Yes—I mean worked on a scientific system.

*Mr. Coxe.* I never found a system that was worth a da— (*correcting himself*) cent.

*Bar.* I've been more fortunate. I have a system that never failed me yet—but it wants a moderate bank. You can't lose, and with average luck you double your capital every three-quarters of an hour. It *may* be two hours, but it averages about three-quarters.

*Mr. Coxe.* That sounds tremendous! (*Much interested.*)

*Bar.* You see, Zero's the death of most systems, but in this case Zero is all in your favour. The bank are mad about it—and it's really hardly fair on them, for it's playing on a certainty.

*Mr. Coxe.* I can't quite see that. They'd have no hesitation in rooking *you* on a certainty.

*Bar.* True—true.

*Mr. Coxe.* They'd have no qualms about it—so why should you? Is it fair to ask—

*Bar.* Perfectly fair—but I'm sorry to say I mustn't reveal it. The fact is, it was confided to me by no less a swell than the apostate Archimandrite Poulos, on his deathbed in the Carpathians, under a solemn promise never to reveal it.

*Mr. Coxe.* I see. Of course—a deathbed confidence—

*Bar.* In the Carpathians——

*Mr. Coxe.* Is sacred. I quite see that.

*Bar.* As a man of honour my tongue is tied. I, now and then, play for a friend—but I never reveal the theory.

*Mr. Coxe.* Does it require a large capital?

*Bar.* You must be prepared to lose £150 at the outset. I don't say you *will* lose it, but you must be prepared to do so. A couple of hundred is still better.

*Mr. Coxe.* Oh, that's nothing!

*Bar.* Nothing at all.

*Mr. Coxe.* Now, I wonder whether—but, no—it's asking too much——

*Bar.* Ah, I know what you were going to say. Will I play with a couple of hundred on your behalf? Wasn't that it? Ha! ha!

*Mr. Coxe.* Well, really, that's very remarkable. They are the very words I had on the tip of my tongue. Can't imagine how you came to guess it.

*Bar.* My dear fellow, it's quite simple. Everybody I meet asks me the same question. Yes, if you like to trust it to me: I've no objection.

*Mr. Coxe.* I can't express my gratitude. If you'll allow me, I'll go to my state room and fetch the notes.

*Bar.* Oh, any time will do.

*Mr. Coxe.* Well, we shall be under weigh in an hour, and when we're under weigh my wife and I are under hatches. We're such awfully bad sailors. So, as you leave the ship in three days, I'd better get the money now.

*Bar.* As you please. By the way, where's the bar?

*Mr. Coxe.* Forward of the saloon.

*Bar.* Then let's split a whisky-and-soda. Come along—after you.

*Mr. Coxe.* I couldn't think of it. Really, it would be impossible—quite out of the question.

*Bar.* As you please.

[*Exit BARKER down companion.* MR. COXE-COXE *about to follow him when DE BRÉVILLE, who has overheard the latter part of the conversation from up stage, comes down.*

*De B.* Ah, Mr. Coxe—one moment.

*Mr. Coxe.* Can't stop. I'm going to split a whisky-and-soda with the Duke.

*De B.* The Duke?

*Mr. Coxe.* Yes, the Duke of Dundee.

*De B.* Ah, that was the Duke you were speaking to?

*Mr. Cox.* Of course. I've been chatting with him for the last twenty minutes. Let me go——

*De B.* But stop——

*Mr. Cox.* Do let me go—I'm keeping him waiting!

[*Exit COXE-COXE.*]

*De B.* The Duke? Why, that fellow's his courier! Here, Cuthbert, my dear boy, come here. (*Enter SIR CUTHBERT.*) I have a good joke for you. That delightful snob Mr. Cox-Coxe has been making love to the Duke's courier, in the belief that it is the Duke himself. It is delightful—it is enchanting—it is English!

*Sir Cuthbert.* Ha! ha! Poor little devil!

*De B.* They have gone below to split a whisky-and-soda. I would have told him of his mistake, but he would not stop to hear, because he wouldn't keep the Duke waiting! Sir Cuthbert, be prepared for a blow. These Cox-Coxes are no longer true to you. Alas, you will lose them!

*Sir C.* I shall be much obliged to the Duke's courier if he will kindly take them off my hands. They are really very tiresome. And so you won't come to Jermyns in October? You are determined to stop in Paris on your way home?

*De B.* Yes—I must report myself at Athens—then I spend October in Paris. After all, it is the city of my birth, and one owes something to one's parents. I have not seen them for two years.

*Sir C.* Of course; you are quite right. You see, I sometimes forget that you are a Frenchman.

*De B.* But you overwhelm me with compliment! Is it possible that I have so many good points that you sometimes allow yourself to believe that I am an Englishman?

*Sir C.* No, no. I don't mean that exactly. There are lots of capital Frenchmen knocking about, of course.

*De B.* Ah, but pardon me, you *do* mean that exactly; for you are a respectable John Bull. And, my respectable John Bull, you hate a Frenchman as you hate a bright Sunday. We are all vain, frivolous, egotistical. Is it not so—hein? But we have our *rôle*—we send you actors, singers, fiddlers, painters—we amuse you and we decorate your wives—that is our *rôle*. And while you pity the funny, ingenious, poor foreign devils, you are ready enough to laugh at their capers and to pay them handsomely for cutting them. My good, respectable, church-going John Bull, you are wrong, wrong, wrong! A word in your ear—but it is in confidence. There are men in France who are not mountebanks! But you do not perceive them, for

your nose is not long, and you can see no further than the tip of it. Go—you are a good fellow, and I am a good fellow, and there are many on my side of the Chapeau that are as good as you, and better—far better—than I; but you do not perceive them because your nose is not long.

*Sir C.* Well, I suppose it's all confounded prejudice, but as a rule I certainly don't get on with Frenchmen. But it's different with you. You were brought up in England—went to Eton and Cambridge. You have all the good solid qualities of an Englishman—you ride straight across Leicestershire, you are conscientious with women, and there's no better hand at big game living.

*De B.* Ah, I kill things, and so you love me, big, bloodthirsty John Bull that you are! Well, I will go on killing, and you will love me more and more. Tigers? Bah! tigers are nothing. When I come to England I will hire a slaughter-house, and poleaxe oxen until you are not able to contain yourself with joy! And then you will be merciful to my countrymen who shoot blackbirds, for the sake of your beloved Armand, who swims in the blood of cattle!

*Sir C.* (*laughing*). My dear fellow, one such Frenchman as you are redeems a whole Department. I wish you'd complete the illusion by marrying an Englishwoman.

*De B.* (*seriously*). Well, it may happen—who knows? Englishwomen make admirable wives. Shall I confess? It is the dream of my life to marry an Englishwoman.

*Sir C.* My dear fellow, I'm rejoiced to hear you say so. But a dream! Why a dream? Why not make it a matter of fact? To a man with your qualities there should be no difficulty in doing that.

*De B.* Ah, but I am not rich; and although there are plenty of rich English girls, I am no fortune-hunter. I must first love—and if I chance to love a rich girl and to be beloved in return, it is well, and I shall marry her; but if she happened to be poor—well, I could not forego her on account of her poverty, nor could I marry her on account of mine. Shall I tell you a secret which has been on the tip of my tongue for six weeks past? I once proposed to an enormously rich woman, and I confess that it was her wealth that fascinated me. It was the first time, and it shall be the last.

*Sir C.* An English girl?

*De B.* Not English, and no girl. An American, ten years older than I, but still sufficiently young. She accepted me—at least so it was understood. But it's an old story. A better suitor presented himself, and I received my *congé*, and it served

me right! But the humiliation! At all events, it taught me a salutary lesson: I shall not marry for money.

*Sir C.* My dear Armand, I'd bet my boots she never made a greater mistake in her whole life.

*De B.* Then you would lose your boots, for she is now the Duchess of Dundee.

*Sir C.* Whew! Dundee cut you out, did he? The fascinating old butterfly! Why, then, my dear fellow, you'd better join your ship at once, for if you remain on board a few minutes longer you'll meet her!

*De B.* It may be. It matters little. The wound was in my self-love, not in my heart—and it has healed, my dear friend, it has healed.

*Enter DIANA CAVEREL from gangway ladder.*

*De B. (aside).* Ah, enfin!

*Dia.* Ah, M. de Bréville, then I am in time. You've not gone. I'm indeed glad of that. I was obliged to go on shore to the agent's, and I intended to have hurried back on board as soon as my business was completed, but there were tiresome delays. His wife insisted on my remaining to luncheon, and I should have gained nothing by refusing, as I couldn't come away without the papers that I went for. However, I'm heartily glad I'm not too late.

*De B.* Indeed, Miss Caverel, I feared that I should be forced to leave without a farewell. It may be long—long—long before we meet again.

*Sir C.* Then, my dear boy, it will be your own fault, for Miss Caverel has most kindly promised to spend a fortnight with us at Jermyns. Come now, doesn't that smile upon you? She will join our house party on the 18th.

*De B.* Of September. Impossible.

*Sir C.* September? No, no, October. I told you October.

*De B.* Ah, October! I did not understand. If it is as late as October, it may be possible for me. I think that would give me three days in Paris. Stop a bit—stop a bit.

*[Consults pocket book. PURSER enters and gives a telegram to SIR CUTHBERT—he retires to read it.]*

*Dia.* Do come, M. de Bréville, I want you—very much.

*De B.* I thank you, Miss Caverel, from the bottom of my heart. *(To SIR CUTHBERT.)* My dear friend, I accept your invitation with heartfelt satisfaction.

*Sir C. (occupied with telegram).* That's capital. We'll count upon you. *[Reverts to telegram.]*

*Enter STEWARD.*

*Stew.* (to DE BRÉVILLE). Captain's compliments, sir, and he would be glad if you could make it convenient to speak to him in his cabin before you go.

*De B.* (aside). Diable! (Aloud.) My compliments to Captain D'Arcy, and I will be with him at once. [Going.]

*Dia.* I shall see you again?

*De B.* Be very sure of that. Indeed, I have much to say to you before I go. In five minutes I shall return. (Impressively.) You will then perhaps, be alone.

[Exit DE BRÉVILLE. She looks after him.]

*Sir C.* (having written a reply to telegram and given it to PURSER). Miss Caverel, I hope you have not decided to go home all the way by sea?

*Dia.* I don't know—I think so. I hate making up my mind beforehand. I shall trust to the impulse of moment when I'm within twelve hours of Marseilles. I detest prearrangement.

*Sir C.* It is sometimes inevitable.

*Dia.* But not in this. My time is my own, you know. I have no one to control me. And you? It was but yesterday that you hoped I had decided not to disembark at Marseilles.

*Sir C.* Five minutes since I hoped so still. But I've just received a cable from my agent which makes it imperative that I should hurry across the Continent as rapidly as possible. So I suppose that in three days it will be "good-bye."

*Dia.* I am sorry.

*Sir C.* Really sorry?

*Dia.* Really sorry.

*Sir C.* But you will not forget that fortnight at Jermyns?

*Dia.* No, that is quite settled. It will be a pleasant fortnight, I'm sure.

*Sir C.* That's kind of you. It will be something—much—to look forward to. I should be very sorry if I thought we were not likely to meet again.

*Dia.* You mean that, I'm sure. Frankly, I shall be unhappy when we have to part, for you have been one of those who have made this voyage very delightful to me.

*Sir C.* And you mean that, I'm sure.

*Dia.* Unfortunately, it's not in my nature to say things I don't mean or to do things that are distasteful to me. I shall be heartily sorry to leave you and heartily glad to see you again. That's blunt and outspoken, is it not?

*Sir C.* (after a pause). Miss Caverel, I am also blunt and

outspoken, and but a poor hand at masking the emotion of the moment, whatever it may be, and so I hope you will bear with me, for it may well be that what I am going to say will cause you some pain.

*Dia.* Sir Cuthbert, I am sure that whatever you may desire to tell me will be better spoken than unspoken.

*Sir C.* Thank you. It may be so, but I am no longer a young man. I have lost my hold on young people, and I have almost forgotten how that which I wish to say should be said. But in the goodness of your heart you will allow something for this, and when I tell you that I would your life were bound up with mine you will perhaps be sorry for me, but you will not be angry.

*Dia.* No—I am not angry. Deeply moved—not angry.

*Sir C.* It is not much, God knows, that I have to offer to a young, rich, and brilliant woman. I too am rich, but that is little. It is perhaps more to the point that if I have the power I have assuredly the will to make your life happy.

*Dia.* You have not much to offer! Sir Cuthbert, you have everything to offer that should appeal to a properly constituted woman. To such a woman the world has nothing better in store than that she should be the wife of such an Englishman as you. To be that woman is to have attained the very crown and summit of the high hill of her desires. But I am not such an one. I am a strange woman—unlike others in many respects. I am wilful, wayward, not subject to control—a woman to whom excitement and adventure are as the breath of her life. I regard you with a deep and proud esteem. I am profoundly touched to know that such a man as you—a man whose name is a byword of punctilious honour and manly rectitude—deems me worthy to become his wife. But I must live among scenes of excitement—I cannot wear the livery of sober respectability. I am but half tamed—but half civilized. I do odd things—I say odd things—I shock people. There is fire within me—there is even a touch of devilry. As the squire's wife I should have duties to discharge that would fret and gall me. I should have to busy myself with the poor—to play the ministering angel among the old, the halt, the lame, and the blind. Oh, do not misunderstand me. I do not mean to speak lightly of these things or of those who do them. But, my dear friend, I am not that woman, and so I may not be your wife. I have spoken plainly—partly because it is in my nature to be frank, but mainly because I am so proud of having gained the love of such a man that I can bear even the pain of telling him how unworthy I am to possess it. Shake hands on it, Sir Cuthbert,



and be the best, the truest, the most valued friend I have ever possessed.

*Sir C. (sadly).* Thank you, Miss Caverel, I thought it only too likely that you would tell me that it could never be—but I did not know that you would say it so gently. Thank you, Miss Caverel!

[*Exit SIR CUTHBERT.*]

*Dia.* He would that my life were bound up with his! It would be a mad coupling—and would it last? No! I must move about the world, for I am as a caged prisoner. I want fire and heat and colour—blue skies and bright sunshine—the bustle and movement of great cities—the whirl and torrent of rapid travel—and the give and take of bright brains. The dull, slate-coloured routine of English country-respectability would weigh me down as does the dull, slate-coloured English sky. Thank me, Cuthbert Jameson, rather for my refusal than for the manner of it. And thank me, too, good woman, whoever you are, who may one day be his wife—for there is no nobler life open to you than that with which such a man has the power to endow you.

[*Exit DIANA.*]

(*The DUCHESS OF DUNDEE is heard speaking "off" on the companion ladder.*)

*Duchess.* Now, doody, just you mind how you toddle, or you'll be slipping under, and I shall have to dive after you. (*To QUARTERMASTER on gangway.*) Take you hold of him, please—he's rather shaky on his pins.

[*DUCHESS appears at gangway with the DUKE, who, being very infirm, is supported by QUARTERMASTER. MR. TAYLOR and MISS BAILEY come from deck cabins to meet them. TAYLOR and QUARTERMASTER lead DUKE to a chair—take shawls, &c., from DUCHESS, and exeunt.*]

*Duke (to QUARTERMASTER).* I thank you—I thank you, my good man. I am personally obliged to you.

[*Exit QUARTERMASTER.*]

*Enter PURSER.*

*Duch.* Once more on board the old ship—and for the fifteenth time too! Well, I'm a cabin passenger this turn, thanks be! (*Sees PURSER.*) Why, Mr. Macquarrie, how do you do? Very glad to see you again, Mr. Macquarrie—why, it's quite like old times! (*shaking him heartily by the hand.*)

*Pur. (rather puzzled).* I believe I have the honour of addressing the Duchess of Dundee?

*Duch.* Yes—that's me, right enough.

*Duke (aside to DUCHESS).* No, no—"that's I"—my love—"that's I."

*Duch.* No, no, Tommy—he said "Duchess"—that's me.

*Duke.*—"I am indeed the Duchess of Dundee."

*Duch.* Poor old boy—he's wandering! Where's his air-cushion? There—now you keep quiet—there's a dear. (*To PURSER.*) He's not as young as he was, you know.

*Pur.* Would your Grace like to see the state rooms?

*Duch.* No, Mr. Macquarrie, my Grace knows the state rooms better than you do. Besides, I can sleep in a butter-box—and as long as I'm near my maid, who always wants her head held in a sea way, that's good enough for me. But the Duke wants looking after, and I'll feel obliged if you'll fix him up as snug as may be.

*Pur.* Most certainly. My instructions are that everything is to be done to make the voyage agreeable to your Graces. You will find this a very comfortable ship.

*Duch.* Then she must have changed quite a bit since I knew her. My sakes, how the old hooker used to dip her nose into it!

*Pur.* I was not aware that we had ever had the honour of your Grace's presence on board—and yet—

[*As though recognizing her.*]

*Duch.* Don't you? Why, Mr. Macquarrie, I was reported to you for incivility to a second-class passenger, and you tried your level best to give me a wiggling and couldn't do it for laughing!

*Pur.* I? Your Grace was reported to me!

*Duch.* Oh, I wasn't "her Grace" then. Why, don't you remember Euphemia S. Van Zyl, under-stewardess?

*Pur.* Euphemia—why, of course—but—

*Duch.* Of course you do—shake hands on it. You may shake hands now that I've qualified for that honour.

*Pur. (shaking her hand respectfully).* I do assure you I'm perfectly thunderstruck.

*Duch.* So am I when I think of it. Lord, what a world of ups and downs it is!

*Duke (aside to DUCHESS).* Euphemia, my love—a little reticence, I beg!

*Duch.* All right, Tommy.

*Pur.* But may I ask—for I've been at sea for six weeks past—how—

*Duch.* Ask? Why, of course you may. When I was last on board, Poppa was in the small hardware line, but he saved money and got into a little pork ring, and I cut the sea. And when the little pork ring became a big pork ring, Poppa made his pile, and I blossomed out as a Society belle. Well, the rest

is easy. Poor Poppa died and left me his pile, and after a week's courtship I married the Duke three weeks since. It's a record, I guess. Here, I'll present you—Tommy, this is Mr. Macquarrie—quite an old friend.

*Duke.* Sir, your most obedient.

*Pur. (bowing).* If you'll allow me, I'll tell the Captain you've come on board. I'm sure he would like to know. (*Aside.*) Euphonia Van Zyl! Under-stewardness! Duchess of Dundee! Well, it's a great country! [*Exit PURSER.*]

*Duke.* My dear—my love, you really distress me. These reminiscences are all very well between ourselves. They are most interesting—most absorbing. But there's no necessity to take all the world into our confidence. A little reticence, I beg!

*Duch.* Well, Macquarrie knows I was a stewardness, and anyhow I'm not ashamed of it.

*Duke.* No, no. A very honourable calling—disagreeable duties, no doubt, but nevertheless most creditable. But it is not necessary to discuss these matters in public. It's not quite delicate, my love.

*Duch.* But it's in all the papers! Everybody knows my Poppa wasn't a gentleman, but he was a smart man, and you may thank your stars and garters too—you *are* a Garter, aren't you?

*Duke.* I have the honour to be a Knight of that Most Noble Order.

*Duch.* Well, that's what I mean. You may thank your stars and garters too that when my Poppa married my Momma they took the first step towards providing you with a ten-million-dollar Duchess, who'll do you credit as soon as she's learnt the ropes; but having only been a Duchess three weeks, and not having had time to lay in a sea-stock of aristocratic small talk, why I must needs draw on my own experience, or bottle up. But all in good time, Tommy—all in good time. Rome wasn't built in a day. Now, doody, you must go and lie down, or you'll be fractious. I know.

*Duke.* But—obleege me in this. I beg that you will not call me "doody" before the stewards.

*Duch.* Why, bless your simple old heart, why not?

*Duke.* It's not dignified. It makes people laugh. No one was ever known to laugh at me—except in the papers.

*Duch.* Very well—I'll take care that you're not laughed at—except in the papers. There! go and take your afternoon nap. Barker!

*Enter BARKER from cabin.*

*Bar.* Your Grace?

*Duch.* Undress the Duke and put him to bed.

*[As DUKE is helped off he kisses his hand to DUCHESS. DUCHESS looks after him.]*

*Duch. (sighing).* Ah, 'taint all pie!

*[BARKER leads the DUKE into cabin.]*

*DE BRÉVILLE comes down. DUCHESS turns and recognizes him. He bows.*

*Duch. (much agitated).* Why, it's De Bréville! 'This is altogether unexpected! But you won't be hard on me—you'll shake hands, won't you? *[He shakes hands with her.]*

*De B.* Duchess, we meet strangely.

*Duch.* Yes, Viscount. But after all the world is a very small potato, and this is a considerable big ship.

*De B.* We parted in Chicago—a year ago.

*Duch.* Yes—at Poppa's pork works, after a tender scene—at the boiling room. I remember it well.

*De B.* Tell me frankly, Duchess—have I been fairly dealt with, do you think?

*Duch.* Well, no. I can't say you have—and when I think of it I feel real mean, and that's so.

*De B.* When I left, I carried with me a promise—need I recall it?

*Duch.* Well, no—I did that. I cabled to you and told you how I was fixed up—I guess I couldn't do more. I was very fond of you—there's no denying that—and although I was the richest Society belle in Chicago I would have married you, poor as you are. But when a British Duke dazzles her, what's a Chicago girl to do?

*De B.* Is his Grace so brilliant?

*Duch.* Well, no, he's not exactly what you'd call brilliant, and that's the truth. But he is His Grace—and in common fairness don't forget that I'm a Republican.

*De B.* True—that should not be forgotten. And when the Duke came—he is not in his first youth, I think?

*Duch.* No, I can't say he is. He's eighty-five, and bad at that.

*De B.* And when the Duke came—who is an indifferent eighty-five—poor De Bréville—who was a well-preserved four-and-twenty—received his *congé*. Oh, it is fit and proper! The Duke has his precedence, and de Bréville acquiesces. He is not a discarded lover—he is the victim of social etiquette.

*Duch. (rather surprised).* He takes it pretty easy, though.

*De B.* He is a man of the world, Duchess. (*With feeling.*) But shall I tell you what I suffered when your telegram came? Shall I tell you of the blank despair that numbed my soul? No, you would say it was for your wealth that I wept.\* Well, let it be so. It is the lost dollars that make my life quiver, even now, as I address your Grace. [*With emotion.*]

*Duch.* Now, don't for gracious sake talk to me like that, or I shall go soft. You don't suppose I've nothing to blame myself with? I ain't chalk, if I ain't cheese. I *did* treat you badly, and that's the truth, and I'm just as sorry as I can hold. But it's done and over—and can't be undone, and won't be undone. I married the Duke to be his wife—and his wife I am, and his wife I mean to be—and a good and true wife too, to the end of the track. So let you and me start fresh and fair, with a clean slate and no reminiscences, for when I reminisce I go soft, and that don't suit Euphemia S. Dundec.

*De B.* Be sure that I shall respect your Grace's wishes. But do not fear—your Grace will not be long oppressed by a presence that revives so much that is painful in your Grace's mind. I am on my way to Athens, and I leave this ship in ten minutes.

*Duch. (rather disappointed).* What—you're not sailing with us? Well, I don't know that it isn't all for the best. Not that I shouldn't like to see you again, only—I'm not prepared for it yet—and that's the truth. So shake hands, Armand, and good-bye—and when you're in England, come and see us. I can't say where we shall be, but you can always find our movements in the Radical papers. But mind—I'm the Duke's wife, and don't you forget it. *I shan't.* [*Exit into cabin.*]

*De B.* Well, Euphemia, go your ways in peace—the Duke has nothing to fear from me. But, United Statesmen, what a blind, illogical race you are! You profess to place enormous import duties upon all commodities that you are unable to produce, and yet you admit, on free-trade principles, the British Peer, who drains more dollars out of your country in a day than your Customs will produce you in a twelvemonth! (*Enter DIANA.*) Ah, Miss Caverel, I have been waiting—waiting—waiting—and in ten minutes I leave you—it may be for always!

*Dia.* But we shall meet at Jermyn's—that is understood.

*De B.* Yes, but that is six months hence—and is not six months an always? Alas, that we can only see things with our own eyes and not with each other's! If I could see with your's, I should see that October was but a few months hence—if you could see with mine, you would see that it is an eternity away!

*Dia.* Then it is well that I cannot see with your eyes.

*De B.* I do not know—it might be well for you, for then you would see me as I am, and not as I seem to be, for I am artificial even to you.

*Dia.* How artificial?

*De B.* I study to please you, and in pursuit of that study I say not the thing that I mean, but the thing that will interest you—and yet you see me more nearly than other people do.

*Dia.* Is it that I am more clear-sighted, or that you are more candid?

*De B.* It is because I have cheated myself into the audacious belief that we are in sympathy with one another. I have the honour to be cast in a gross and clumsy copy of your own mould. You have a strangely original nature—so have I, but I push it too far. You have strong, passionate, unconventional impulses—so have I, but they get me into discreditable trouble. You have a taste for adventure—so have I, but it is a brutal taste that leads me to destroy strong lives. Miss Caverel, I know you well. For three weeks past, day by day and hour by hour, I have studied you thoroughly, for you are, without exception, the most deeply interesting woman I have ever encountered. Miss Caverel, to you I would reveal myself—to you I would be the man I am—with the much that is bad and the somewhat that is good—but to no other woman I ever knew.

*Dia. (earnestly).* Prove this to me, for indeed I would know you as you are.

*De B.* Then listen. I am vain—arbitrary—dictatorial—self-sufficient. I pretend that I attach no value to the world's good word, but in that I lie, for praise is as the breath of my nostrils. I am headstrong—wilful—passionate—and so, many times unreasonable. On the surface I am honourable, but it is with the honour of a gamester who does not cheat his opponent but who ruins his tailor. In danger I am sufficiently cool and steadfast, but here again I am instigated by the lust of praise to do that from which I should shrink were I unseen and alone. To those whom I love I am kind to the verge of folly. I am open-handed and generous—but not generous to men who are my rivals. To women? Well, there are women and women. It may seem incredible, but I once behaved with honour to a married woman whom I loved and who loved me—but the circumstances were exceptional, and it might not occur again. Still, let it weigh for something in a scale which suffers much from counterpoise. In fairness to myself, let me add that much of me that is evil is perhaps evil because I have never loved worthily until now. Dear lady, this is the man with the much

that is ill and the somewhat that is good, who lays his poor erring heart at your feet

*Dia. (after a pause).* Shall I be frank with you? (*He bows.*) You ask me to give you my life—to entrust my whole future to your guidance—your care—your keeping. You b'd me love you—honour yo'r—obey you. You ask me to mould my life on yours—to throw all else aside that I may, in all and all, devote myself to you and you alone. (*He makes a gesture of deprecation.*) Ah, forgive me, but this is what you ask. It is at my estimate of a wife's devotion that your demand must be measured—not at yours. I well know what I have to give, and, whatever that may be, you ask me to give it to you. Well, Armand de Bréville, take it, for it is your own. (*He seizes her hand and kisses it.*) I take you as you are—knowing you well, loving you much, hoping all things, fearing none. Shall I tell you that I have dreaded to look beyond this parting of ours? Shall I tell you that I had not the courage to face the blank life that lay before me after you had gone out of my eyes? Well, well—I did not know—how was I to know?—that the moment of our parting would be the crowning joy of my life!

[*He takes her in his arms and kisses her rapturously, then moves to gangway. Picture.*

END OF ACT I.

## ACT II.

WEDDED.

(*Twelve months have elapsed.*)

SCENE.—DE BRÉVILLE'S apartments in the Champs Elysées. DE BRÉVILLE is discovered with M. PAILLARD, a money-lender. DE BRÉVILLE seated at writing-table. PAILLARD on sofa.

*Paill.* Is it not rather late, M. le Vicomte, to find fault with the terms upon which I advance money? We have had dealings together for several years, and you owe me, in principal and interest, a very considerable sum—and now, for the first time, you complain of my terms. Frankly, you are unreasonable, M. le Vicomte.

*De B.* My dear M. Paillard. I did not complain. I merely remarked that they were usurious.

*Paill.* Well, I am a usurer. You should recollect, M. le Vicomte, that my profession is a very hazardous one.

*De B.* And that is why you charge sixty per cent.

*Paill.* No doubt. If it were a certainty I should be satisfied with five, and be glad to get it.

*De B.* Then I may conclude that, on an average, only one in twelve of your clients pays you.

*Paill.* Upon my word, it almost comes to that. There are heavy disappointments in my calling.

*De B.* There are heavy disappointments in all callings—even in mine.

*Paill.* In yours? In diplomacy?

*De B.* Even in that. But I was referring to my other profession, M. Paillard.

*Paill.* To tiger-hunting?

*De B.* To fortune-hunting. I am a poor man with sporting instincts, highly extravagant tastes, and a defective moral sense. Consequently it follows that I hunt fortunes.

*Paill.* I am, of course, aware that Madame la Vicomtesse possesses a very considerable fortune, but I should be doing an injustice both to her and to you if I assumed that in marrying her you were influenced solely by that consideration. The personal charm of Madame la Vicomtesse is so overwhelming that even——

*De B.* M. Paillard, we will, if you please, refrain from discussing the personal charm of Madame la Vicomtesse. It is enough that when I married that lady she was possessed of two million and a half of francs. I afforded you every opportunity for satisfying yourself that that was the case, and of those opportunities you fully availed yourself.

*Paill.* No doubt. As a matter of form.

*De B.* As a matter of form. Well, M. Paillard, I have to inform you, as a matter of fact, that nearly every franc of that considerable fortune has melted into air.

*Paill (aghast).* You—you are not in earnest. You are amusing yourself with me?

*De B.* I am, unfortunately, quite in earnest.

*Paill.* Am I to understand, M. le Vicomte, that you are absolutely unable to meet your many notes of hand?

*De B.* You are to understand, M. Paillard, that with the exception of a moderate balance at my bankers', I have nothing in the world but the insignificant salary attached to my office as a Secretary of Legation. But come—I will be reasonable.



You tell me that, if your business were a certainty, you would be satisfied with an interest of five per cent. I am prepared to pay you five per cent. on the principal sum I owe you until I am in a position to pay the balance of principal and interest, on the old terms—and this, I may tell you in confidence, will in all probability be within the next eight or ten months.

*Paill.* What prospect is there that you will be able to do this?

*De B.* A prospect which, in my confident belief, amounts to a certainty; but unfortunately I cannot afford to be more explicit at present. Will you accept my offer—which, at all events, means something—or do you prefer to make me a bankrupt—which means nothing at all?

*Paill.* (after a pause). M. de Bréville, you have not treated me handsomely, but as you are an old client, I will be lenient with you. I will accept your offer and renew all your bills for twelve months, but when that time expires, be well assured that my forbearance will expire with it.

*De B.* (writing a cheque). When that time expires your forbearance may go to the devil, M. Paillard, for I shall have no further need of it. There is my cheque for one-twelfth of the interest due to you. And now I feel that in detaining you any longer I should be doing an injustice to the brilliant commercial circles of which you are so distinguished an ornament. *Au revoir*, M. Paillard.

*Paill.* You understand me, sir. If my bills are not met with interest in full, within twelve months, no consideration will interfere to prevent my punishing you by every means that the Code affords me. You know me to be absolutely a man of my word when I have no reason to be anything else. Good morning, M. le Vicomte!

[*Exit PAILLARD.*]

*De B.* Yes, Paillard, you'll be paid. It is a fearful step to take, but there's no help for it. Bills—bills—bills everywhere, debts of honour—debts of dishonour—all of which were to have been satisfied out of Diana's fortune and with her knowledge and consent—and now—but there—they'll be paid, Paillard—they'll be paid—God help her!

*Enter DIANA.*

*Dia.* Armand, has the man gone?

*De B.* Yes, Diana, the man has gone.

*Dia.* And he will wait?

*De B.* Yes, he will wait. I have paid him some interest on account, which reduces my balance to three thousand francs.

*Dia.* Oh, Armand, Armand, forgive me, my love—oh, forgive me! (*Kneels at his feet.*)

*De B.* What have I to forgive, Diana?

*Dia.* I promised you a life of happiness—a life free from debt—a life of independence and enjoyment—and my heart leapt within me at the thought that I could keep this promise—and all I have done is to hamper you with a wife who seems to have lost even the power to make your home acceptable to you—oh, forgive me, Armand, forgive me!

*De B.* You have given me much love and much devotion. These are not to be bought with money. If I am often from home it is because I am a poor man and must work.

*Dia.* The life I have provided for you is so different from the life I promised you. You were to have thrown off your office shackles, and we were to have wandered at our will over this beautiful earth, drinking our fill of the joy of travel—encountering hazards which to you and to me are the very music of existence—daring everything—fearing nothing—the life of the mountain, the forest, the desert, and the sea! Oh, Armand, I do not regret these things for my own sake. But I know how your restless spirit chafes under the galling restraint of daily duty to be done, and how your mind frets over the bitter disappointment I have caused you. It stands between us like a dividing spectre—intangible—invisible—but there—always and inevitably there—there—there!

*De B.* There is no spectre that is not the outcome of your own sensitiveness, my child. When we are divided it is at the command of my exacting chief. If there were no such chief there would be no such division.

*Dia.* That is true. When do you start for Naples?

*De B.* In half an hour. Lachaud, my lawyer, is to call for me here, and we are to travel as far as Monte Carlo together.

*Dia.* And how long will you be away from me?

*De B.* Ah, it is not easy to say. Diplomatic work is always uncertain, and Neapolitan officials are not remarkable for expedition. Perhaps three weeks—perhaps three months.

*Dia.* Three months! Three more weary months to be passed in this dismal solitude!

*De B.* My child, be just, even to Paris. It is not dismal, and it is not a solitude.

*Dia.* To a lonely, heart-weary woman—knowing no one, known by none—Paris is more irritatingly dismal than the dingiest London suburb. When you are here it is well, and I am content; but when you are away I am as a hungry woman looking on at a feast of which she may not eat, and who is

called upon, nevertheless, to go into ecstasies over the *menu*. Why am I excluded from my natural privileges? I am the Vicomtesse de Bréville—your wife—and as such entitled to hold my own among the proudest of your people. But you have not yet consented to acknowledge me—and in this multitude, in which I yearn to mix, I am alone—alone—alone!

*De B.* My dear child, forgive me—but, frankly, you are not reasonable. My father and mother, as I told you when we met at Jernyns, are aristocrats of the most conservative type, and if they had known that I was about to ally myself with a lady whose parents were engaged in commerce they would have disavowed us both. It would have been useless to tell them that the world does not hold a purer woman than she whom I was about to marry. Their reply would have been, "Her people sold something," and that would have been their last word.

*Dia.* Still, though you were of age and could legally dispense with their consent, it would have been better to have asked it.

*De B.* It would have done no good. Setting sentimental considerations aside, my father, although he is not rich, has great influence at our Foreign Office, and it is open to him to exert it either for me or against me. As it is——

*Dia.* As it is, you have told him, and he has contented himself with a cold acknowledgment of the receipt of your letter.

*De B.* Yes, but when my parents come to know you——

*Dia.* Know me? In God's name, how are they to know me?

*De B.* When I see them—which I will do immediately after my return—I shall perhaps succeed in reconciling them to the inevitable. My child, I have a persuasive tongue——

*Dia. (bitterly).* Yes, you have!

*De B.* After all, I am their son, and they love me very dearly—and although they are naturally irritated just now, yet when they see what an admirable daughter I have given them, they will surely relent.

*Dia.* Armand, I wish to speak with all respect of your parents; but it is foreign to my nature to wait submissively until they are persuaded to accept me as their daughter. They are entitled to satisfy themselves that I am a woman of good social position and good repute, but their right ends at that point. I have not married myself out of all self-respect. I still retain some independence of spirit. I consent to hold over until their return, but I will wait no longer. If they refuse to acknowledge me, that they will do for once and all, and from that point I refuse to acknowledge them,

*De B.* So be it, Diana. It shall be as you say.

*Dia. (surprised).* You agree to this? You will then acknowledge me publicly and before all men?

*De B.* Yes—that I promise.

*Dia.* Thank you, Armand; I can breathe more freely now that that is understood. Oh, forgive me—forgive me—but I am so miserable at being left so long alone! I hate the people you are with—the women you see——

*De B.* I see no women. I have you always in my eyes.

*Dia.* Was I in your eyes when you were staying in Park Lane with your old *fiancée*, the widowed Duchess of Dundee—and that within three months of her husband's death?

*De B.* My dear girl, the Duchess of Dundee invited me to stay at her house, and as I could do my work as well from Park Lane as from Albert Gate I accepted her invitation. The Duchess is eccentric and unconventional, but her eccentricities are wholly on the surface, and I give you my word that, *au fond*, her Yankee Grace is a good and honourable woman who is quite incapable of an unworthy attachment.

*Dia.* Armand, I think I love you better than a wife should love her husband. I know of no good reason why I should doubt you, but you are too much away from me, and to a woman of my temperament the unknown is terrible! Oh, the unknown—the unknown! The wondering where you are—what you are saying and doing—and with whom and to whom! The shapeless, formless, intangible spectre that pursues me, sleeping and waking, when you are away! My God, I can't get away from it! Armand, why cannot I go with you this time? I will be ready in half an hour—oh, let me go—for God's sake—for the love of me that you say you have in your heart—let me go!

*De B.* My wife, do you know what you are asking? Have you counted the cost? A journey to Naples and back will cost—how many thousand francs? Can we afford to indulge such fancies? Come, now, candidly, can we afford this? You know how terribly we need money—how, since your losses, we have had to deny ourselves every luxury—can we afford this?

*Dia.* It is true. You are very prudent, all at once. Bah! I am a fool to give myself up to you thus. Go your way—who are you that you are to be so loved? Are you so much better, wiser, braver, fairer than other men that they are to be as nothing to me, and you are to be as all in all? Are you so—(*suddenly breaking down*). Yes, yes—God help me, you are the life that is in me, and I love you till I hate and abhor you for the fearful thralldom in which my senses are held! For God's sake, take your spell from me, and let me be as other men's wives are!

There—go—what is all this to you? After all, I am only your wife; it would be well for me if I could think of you only as a husband!

*De B.* Diana, you are utterly unreasonable.

*Dia.* Do you think I don't know that? Do you think that any woman that was reasonable would stake her life's happiness on the chance that the love of such a man as you would remain at the fever heat of its inception? Unreasonable? Why, I am mad!

*De B.* My child, what have I done to justify this outburst? Have I ever spoken an unkind word to you?

*Dia.* No—you are kind—kind—kind—always and invariably kind—and no more! A curse on your kindness—it is not what I want of you! I would as lief you were brutal as kind—your kindness is but one remove from indifference. Between kindness and such love as I give you there is a great gulf fixed. I cross that gulf to go to you—you do not cross it to come to me!

*[Exit weeping.]*

*De B.* Ah, my poor child, how truly you speak, and how little you guess that you speak truly! How am I to break the truth to you who have set your heart so fully on me? Bah! it is not to be thought of—it must be done without reflection—done with closed eyes, a deadened heart, and every sense reduced to dull negation!

*Enter M. LACHAUD.*

*Lach.* Ah, my dear Armand, I am here in good time. Have you taken your farewell of Madame? Ah, what a lucky husband you are!

*De B.* Lucky?

*Lach.* Yes—doubly lucky—lucky in being able to make up your mind to quit so charming a lady, and lucky to have so charming a lady to return to when your holiday is at an end. Frankly, if I were in your case, even the Duchess of Dundee—("Hush!" *from DE BRÉVILLE*)—would not lure me from her side. With me, the end of my holiday would be its beginning.

*De B.* My good Lachaud, it is easy to theorize about the married felicity of one's friends. But theories have this failing—that they are apt to be fallacies.

*Lach.* What do you mean? In Madame De Bréville you have—

*De B.* In Madame de Bréville I have a beautiful and blameless wife, of whom everyone would approve except the only people whose approval is important to us—my parents.

*Lach.* Is it possible that your parents have any fault to find

with her? To know Madame de Bréville is to accept her as a miraculous incarnation of an impossible abstraction!

*De B.* Perhaps; but my parents do *not* know Madame de Bréville. More than that, they never will know her.

*Lach.* You astound me! But you were of age when you married. Twenty-nine, were you not?

*De B.* No, twenty-four.

*Lach.* But, my dear friend, what you have just told me is very serious. You are, of course, aware that by our Civil Code before a man who is under twenty-five may marry he must obtain the consent of his father and mother, or his marriage is voidable at their pleasure.

*De B.* Or at his own.

*Lach.* Or at his own.

*De B.* My dear Lachaud, I know it but too well. My parents, as you are aware, are aristocrats of the purest blood. They are poor, but their pride of lineage is superlative, and they would rather have seen their son lying dead before them than that he should marry a girl, English or French, whose people belonged to the merchant class. My only hope was to marry her and rely upon their accepting her as a daughter-in-law rather than place her in the position of a nullified wife.

*Lach.* But your father and mother will justify your confidence in them? They will not condemn this innocent lady to a life of unmerited ignominy?

*De B.* Alas! my friend, in crediting them with such *bourgeois* emotions you do injustice their pride of birth.

*Lach.* But M. le Marquis is the soul of honour.

*De B.* He is, but his honour is not so much heroic as heraldic. The De Brissacs, the De Vincennes, the De Gallifets, and the De Contades have contributed his ingredients, and my mother is descended in a direct line from the Bretignys of Poitou. From the tone of my father's reply to the letter in which I announced my marriage to him I am convinced (though I have not yet broken it to my wife) that he intends to apply at once to the Civil Tribunal for a declaration of nullity.

*Lach.* Surely—surely you misjudge him!

*De B.* Ah, I know him well! And now, my dear Lachaud. I am in this difficulty: I love my wife dearly—I love my parents dearly. In marrying her I deceived them, and in taking the steps which I feel sure they intend to take they are well within their rights. This question, then, naturally arises: Am I, who wilfully deceived them, justified in allowing the odium of these proceedings to rest upon their aged shoulders? In

other words, if these proceedings must be taken, is it not rather my duty to initiate them myself?

[*Carefully watching the effect of his words on LACHAUD.*

*Lach.* To initiate them yourself? (*DE BRÉVILLE nods.*) To apply in your own name for a decree of nullity?

*De B.* Rather than impose that terrible necessity upon the shoulders of my father.

*Lach.* But you are jesting! You are incapable of such an act of infamy towards the woman you have sworn to cherish for life! If I am deceived in this——

*De B.* Lachaud, I have too much respect for the sentiment that inspires a burst of honest indignation to criticize too closely the shape in which it presents itself. You have described my proposal as an act of infamy. It is a strong expression, but let it remain until I have convinced you that it is an act of justice.

*Enter DIANA.*

*Dia.* I beg your pardon, Armand—I thought you were alone.

*De B.* This gentleman, whom you will permit me to present to you, is M. Lachaud, who is to be my travelling companion. (*Aside to LACHAUD.*) Not a word about the Duchess! (*Aloud.*) M. Lachaud—the Vicomtesse de Bréville.

*Lach.* Madame la Vicomtesse, I am overjoyed at the honour that is conferred upon me. (*Aside.*) Poor lady! Poor lady!

*Dia.* (*with assumed gaiety.*) You have come to rob me of my husband, M. Lachaud. This is not kind, for he has only been home a week. Will you not relent, and spare him to me a little longer?

*Lach.* Madame, it distresses me beyond measure that my presentation to you should be associated in your mind with so deplorable a circumstance as M. de Bréville's departure. But pardon me, Madame—I do not take him from you.

*Dia.* True—he goes willingly!

*Lach.* M. de Bréville has, no doubt, some *adieux* to make which it would ill become me to interrupt. If Madame will permit me to retire——

*Dia.* It is unnecessary. M. de Bréville is so well accustomed to take leave of me that our farewells are of a very business-like description. And we part for so short a time—three months—perhaps only two!

*De B.* Pardon me, my child, but if Lachaud will permit me, I would gladly be alone with you for a few minutes.

[*LACHAUD bows, and exit.*

*Dia.* (*surprised.*) Armand! What can you have to say to me that M. Lachaud should not hear?

*De B. (with some emotion).* I have only to say farewell, Diana. It is a little word, but—sometimes it means much. Only farewell!

*Dia.\** Why—Armand! (*Looking into his eyes.*) One—one would think you were sorry to go!

*De B.* I am. Deeply sorry, Diana.

*Dia. (surprised at his emotion).* Are you—are you in earnest, Armand?

*De B. (sighing).* Yes, Diana—I am—in earnest!

*Dia. (looking earnestly at him).* Armand! Why, this is music from heaven! Months have passed since you spoke to me in this way! What can it mean?

*De B.* You know that I have a foolish unreasoning faith in presentiment. Well, I have a foreboding that a calamity is in store for you—that grave sorrow may come upon you before long. You are in the habit of laughing at my forebodings, but they impress me, and I cannot shake them off. And so, Diana, I am very sad at leaving you.

*Dia.* A calamity! (*Suddenly.*) You have no quarrel on hand? You are not in any danger?

*De B.* No—I know of none. (*DIANA relieved.*) Yet if a heavy blow should fall on you during my absence——

*Dia.* Do you mean if you should die?

*De B.* Put it in that way, if you will. If my foreboding should come true—if it should come to pass that you find yourself husbandless—harden your heart towards me, my child, and remember that I am one who is not worth weeping for—that I am a cold, cruel, self-seeking man, who has so poor an appreciation of wifely love that he has dared to repay your priceless devotion with coldness, indifference, and neglect. Bah! such a man is not worth a tear.

*Dia.* Armand, it is cruel—it is foolish to say these things to me! There is a quiver in your voice which gives them the lie. Oh, forget my reproaches! When you hold me to you as you hold me now, I know that I have misjudged you, and my heart harks back to the days when your love was as the torrid sun, and I live once more the supreme life that I lived then. It is not that you have not loved me enough, but that I have loved you too well. Oh, my God, can it be that the love I had I have again? It will abide with you, Armand, while you are away—and it will come back with you—it will come back with you?

[*Kneels, sobbing at his feet.*]

*De B.* Yes, yes. Diana—surely—surely! There, there—be brave and strong! I am not worth such love. Diana—let me go, or I shall break down!



*Dia.* No—stop there—stop there—give me time to stamp this moment on my memory! There—I have it—go—I can bear it now!

*De B.* Farewell, Diana! There—think of me at my worst, and waste no time on me! Adieu!

[*Exit DE BRÉVILLE hastily.*]

*Dia.* (*staggers to a table, on which she rests*). He is gone! This parting, that has brooded over me like a bird of evil omen during the past week, it is over, and—God help me!—it has left me happier than I have been for months past! What in Heaven's name is the cause of this strange sense of calm relief, as if some wringing pain had been suddenly assuaged? (*Suddenly, as if a light had broken on her.*) The man loves me! loves me! Ah, God, it is that! It has all come back to me again! There has been a dark and sombre interval—an interval of gloom and deadness—but the cloud has passed, and the glorious sun beams full upon me in all its torrid fervour—as of old—as of old!

[*Enter servant, with card.*]

*Serv.* A gentleman desires to see Madame la Vicomtesse.

*Dia.* To see me! (*Takes card.*) Sir Cuthbert Jameson! Show this gentleman in, at once! (*Exit Servant.*) Sir Cuthbert Jameson, of all men! It is well that he comes at this moment; it is well that he comes when I can tell him, frankly and truthfully, that I am as happy as he could desire me to be! (*Enter Servant, showing in Sir CUTHBERT.*) Ah, Sir Cuthbert, this is indeed a most welcome and most delightful surprise! I cannot tell you how overjoyed I am to see you, my dear, dear old friend!

*Sir C.* Thank you heartily for your kind reception. I should have given you notice of my intention to call upon you, but I started for Paris at an hour's notice, and I arrived only an hour ago, and—well, I couldn't wait! And how is Arnand, and where is he?

*Dia.* How unfortunate! He has just left for Monte Carlo on his way to Naples. He will be very sorry when he learns that he has missed you. Ten minutes sooner and you would have seen him.

*Sir C.* That's unlucky indeed, for I have a proposal to make to which his consent is indispensable.

*Dia.* A proposal?

*Sir C.* Yes. I don't, as a rule, interfere in other people's affairs, but I confess I am not quite happy about this marriage of yours—without the consent and approval of his parents.

*Dia.* But you know how we were situated. I wrote and told you all.

*Sir C.* Yes, yes! Well, we won't discuss that. You know my views on the subject of concealment in such matters, and there's no necessity to repeat them. The mischief's done, and now the only question is—What is the best thing to do, and can I be of any service in helping you to do it?

*Dia.* You are very, very kind.

*Sir C.* Not a bit. I'm a fidgety old fellow, whose mind is not at rest upon this matter, and in my own interests I want to quiet it—that's all. Now, in the first place, have your husband's parents been informed of his marriage?

*Dia.* Yes. Armand wrote to them (they are at Tours—his father is the General commanding the district), telling them everything.

*Sir C.* Come, that's well. And they?

*Dia.* They contented themselves with a cold acknowledgment of the receipt of his letter.

*Sir C.* That is all?

*Dia.* That is all.

*Sir C.* Then, surely, if there ever was a case for an intermediary this is one. I will wire to De Bréville for his sanction, and as soon as I get it I will start for Tours, and the deuce is in it if I don't bring them round. I can start to-morrow and be back again in a couple of days, and perhaps bring them with me. Now—what do you say?

*Dia.* I say that you are a good, true, and tried friend, and that whatever you think it right to do will be the best thing that could be done.

*Sir C.* Then I take that as consent. Now, tell me about yourself. You are well and thoroughly happy?

*Dia.* Quite well, and, but for the difficulty you have referred to, as happy as ever I was in my life.

*Sir C.* Come, that's good news indeed. And you don't find it irksome to be chained down to one spot?

*Dia.* I must make the best of a necessity which, after all, is not so very terrible. Of course, this is very unlike the life I intended to lead, but since the failure of the Brisbane Bank our resources have been much straitened, and when Armand has to go abroad he cannot afford to take me with him. But you must not suppose that I am complaining.

*Sir C.* You are a brave lady, indeed. And so Armand is on his way to Monte Carlo?

*Dia.* For a few days only—on his way to Naples.

*Sir C.* He will find an old friend at Monte Carlo or at Naples—her Grace of Dundee.

*Dia.* (surprised). The Duchess of Dundee?

*Sir C.* Yes—didn't you know she was there? \*

*Dia.* (*agitated*). No. No, I did not know it.

*Sir C.* Oh, yes. The jolly widow is (in her expressive vernacular) simply making the place hum. She has bought a lovely *château*—the Villa Bonaventura. She gives magnificent *fêtes*—plays heavily—doesn't care what she loses—and altogether, as she says, does her best to make up the lee-way that she lost when Tommy was more or less alive. She spends her time between Monte Carlo and Naples, running backwards and forwards in her fifteen hundred ton steam yacht, the Flying Eagle. Altogether, she's the presiding genius of the place.

*Dia.* (*aside*). He did not tell me that that woman was there. He must have known it—why did he keep it from me? He knows that I hate her—hate her!

*Sir C.* (*noticing her agitation*). My dear lady, what in the world is the matter?

*Dia.* Nothing—nothing—(*after a pause, throws herself sobbing on the sofa*)—Oh, I see it all now! Oh, my God, I see it all—I see it all!

*Sir C.* Come, come—this won't do! Surely there is nothing to distress you in the fact that the Duchess happens to be at Monte Carlo?

*Dia.* Sir Cuthbert, I told you just now that I was as happy as I have ever been. When I spoke it was true, for my husband—cold, polite, insensible as a rule—had displayed an emotion at leaving me which filled me with a joy to which I have been for months a stranger. But I have good reason to believe that this woman attracts him—he concealed from me the fact that she is there—and he has gone to her. That's all—he has gone to her!

*Sir C.* My dear Vicomtesse, you are surely torturing yourself with groundless suspicion. The Duchess is——

*Dia.* The duchess is an old flame of his—he was once engaged to marry her. When he went to London he stopped at her house in Park Lane. His letters to me were dated from the Embassy, and I only learnt the truth through the gossip of a Society paper. Now, although we are desperately pressed for money, he takes Monte Carlo on his road to Naples—whither she is in the habit of going—in her steam yacht—in her steam yacht!

*Sir C.* But all this is open to very obvious explanation.

*Dia.* It is open to an explanation that might, perhaps, satisfy anybody but a jealous woman. But I am a jealous woman, and I am not prepared to accept miraculous coincidences. It is well that you should know the truth. When I was rich, he loved me after the manner of his kind—when I lost all, his affection,

such as it was, cooled down, and for months past I have lived the life of the damned—loving him with an intensity that even his coldness could not abate—sitting, as it were, by the bedside of his dying love—watching it as it grew day by day weaker and weaker, and trying to blind myself to the certainty that its death was close at hand!

*Sir C.* That I feel deeply for you I need hardly say, but I am convinced that you have no ground for jealousy of the Duchess. She is frightfully frank, direct, and outspoken, but if I have any knowledge of human nature, she is incapable of an intrigue with a married man.

*Dia.* But that is just the point! How do I know that she knows that he *is* married? Is it likely that he would have revealed the fact to her, of all women? In her eyes he is as single as ever he was—and there, my dear old friend, is the case in a nutshell, and look at it as you will, you can't make more of it or less of it than I have done.

*Enter SERVANT.*

*Serv.* A lady and gentleman desire to see Madame la Vicomtesse.

*Dia.* I am engaged—I can see no one.

*Serv. (handing cards).* Pardon, Madame, but I believe they are the father and mother of M. le Vicomte.

*Dia.* His father and mother! What did you say?

*Serv.* I said that I was not sure that Madame was receiving to-day.

*Dia.* They must have returned unexpectedly from Tours. *(To SIR CUTHBERT.)* What shall I do?

*Sir C.* You must see them—you can't deny yourself to them.

*Dia. (after a pause).* Inform M. le Marquis and Madame la Marquise de Bréville that I will receive them.

*[Exit SERVANT.]*

*Sir C.* Perhaps I had better go?

*Dia.* On the contrary, your presence, if you will be so good as to remain, will give me courage. Pray don't leave me.

*Sir C.* As you please.

*Enter Servant, ushering the MARQUIS and MARQUISE DE BRÉVILLE.*

*(The MARQUIS is dressed in the undress uniform of a General of Division.)*

*[Exit SERVANT.]*

*Marquis.* I believe I have the honour to address the Vicomtesse de Bréville. *(She bows.)* Permit me to introduce myself.

I am the Marquis de Bréville—this lady is the Marquise—and we are the parents of the gentleman to whom, as we have recently learned, you were secretly married some six months since.

*Dia.* I need hardly say that my husband's father and mother are honoured visitors at my husband's house. Pray be seated.

*Marquis.* You are very good. This gentleman? (*alluding to SIR CUTHBERT*).

*Dia.* This gentleman is Sir Cuthbert Jameson, an old and trusted friend of my husband's and of my own. Sir Cuthbert possesses our fullest confidence, and you may speak in his presence without reserve.

*Marquis.* I am honoured in making the acquaintance of Sir Cuthbert Jameson. Then, Madame, I will proceed at once to the object of our visit. In the first place, I beg that what I have to say shall not be interpreted in any way as personal to yourself, but simply as addressed to a lady, whoever she may be, whom our son has privately married without his parents' consent.

*Marquise.* You will understand, Madame, that we are far from assuming that the lady our son has married is not in every way fit to be his wife, but it is only right that before we acknowledge her in that capacity we should be supplied with ample proof that she is such a lady as we, if our son had thought proper to consult us, would have fully approved.

*Dia.* That, Madame la Marquise, is quite reasonable.

*Marquis.* At the same time it would be folly to blind ourselves to the fact that if our son believed it to be impolitic to take the customary and filial course of presenting that lady to his parents, he must have had some powerful motive for this abstention. But it is not impossible that this may be susceptible of some explanation, and upon this point also the Marquise and I are open to conviction.

*Marquise.* We love our son dearly, Madame, and so we would gladly be convinced.

*Dia.* I admit that the secrecy of our marriage is scarcely calculated to prejudice you in my favour. But I must say at once that for this secrecy your son is responsible. My own feeling was that concealment was undignified, unnecessary, unfilial, and calculated to provoke misconstruction.

*Marquis.* Madame, the sentiment redounds to your honour. May I ask how it was that our son was uninfluenced by its good sense?

*Dia.* He conceived that if our engagement were avowed you would raise objection to it on the ground that my father was

occupied in commerce, whereas your natural affection for your son would induce you to forgive him after he had taken a step that was irrevocable. I confess that the argument appeared to me to be unjust to yourselves, to himself, and to me; but he was firm upon the point, and, as I loved your son, I obeyed him.

*Marquis (coldly).* Not altogether unjust, Madame. To be quite frank with you, not altogether unjust. It is right that I should admit at once that if I had been informed that my son intended to contract a *mésalliance* I should unquestionably have forbidden the engagement. [MARQUIS and MARQUISE rise.]

*Sir C.* A *mésalliance*! Why, sir, when you apply such a term to your son's marriage with this lady you cannot be aware—

*Dia. (rising).* Stay, Sir Cuthbert. M. le Marquis has expressed his views in terms that admit of no discussion. As to my birth, I am the daughter of an Australian merchant, who made a fortune and bequeathed it to me. Most of that fortune I have unhappily lost, and I am now quite poor. I have nothing to add except that I love your son and I am his wife. You will perhaps forgive me if I suggest that this interview has reached its natural termination. [Exit DIANA.]

*Sir C.* M. le Marquis, I must tell you that (quite unwittingly, I am sure) you do this lady a grave injustice.

*Marquis.* It distresses me, Sir Cuthbert Jameson, that you should think so, but it is possible that you do not quite appreciate the sentiment that actuates us. We of the old Noblesse are (as you would describe it) greatly prejudiced against alliances between one of our order and a lady, however worthy in other respects, of inferior birth. It is an act which we are so narrow-minded as to consider unpardonable.

*Sir C.* Sir, this lady's father was in every sense a gentleman, and my own intimate friend. His daughter is an accomplished lady, whom any man, even though he were descended from Pépin himself, might be proud to marry.

*Marquis.* Sir, you speak as an English gentleman—frankly and straightforwardly, but entirely (forgive me) from your own point of view. In your country—a country in which men and women of distinguished rank do not think it beneath them to engage in trade—I believe I am right in this?

*Sir C.* Well, of late years people of rank with narrow means have not thought it discreditable to work for their living.

*Marquis.* So I have understood. In a country in which this singular anomaly is recognized and permitted by its ancient aristocracy, I can well believe that our prejudice against trade

may appear to be illiberal and narrow-minded. Still it exists, and must therefore be reckoned with.

*Sir C.* Well, sir, now that I know your views upon this point, I must admit that in keeping his intended marriage secret from you, your son was not as blameworthy as I supposed him to be.

*Marquis.* And you will pardon me, Sir Cuthbert Jameson, if I remind you that he is always blameworthy who defies the laws of his country.

*Sir C.* How do you mean? What law has he defied?

*Marquis.* He has broken the 183rd Article of the Civil Code, which declares that before a man who is under the age of twenty-five may marry he must obtain the consent of his father and mother—or whichever of them may be living.

*Sir C.* But how does this apply? Your son is eight or nine and twenty.

*Marquise.* Forgive me, sir—six months since, when he married, our son wanted four months of twenty-five.

*Sir C.* You amaze me beyond measure!

*Marquise.* You will not tell me, sir, that our son has deceived you upon this point?

*Sir C.* I certainly cannot, at this moment, charge my memory with any direct statement of his to that effect, but the impression on my mind—

*Marquis.* Still, sir, it is beyond all question that he was under legal age when he went through the form of marriage with this lady—consequently his act in marrying her without our consent is not only unpardonable—it is illegal. Forgive me, sir, if we appear to you to be unreasonable, but you are an Englishman, and you do not understand these things. We have the honour to wish you good-day.

[*They are about to leave the room.*]

*Enter DIANA, deadly pale and trembling with agitation. She holds an open letter in her hand.*

*Dia.* Stay—do not go yet. Something has happened, and you must hear it. I have just received a letter—from your son. It was written—before he left—and has been brought to me—by a commissionaire from the railway station. Sir Cuthbert—read it to them—I can't—I can't!

(*SIR CUTHBERT takes the letter and reads.*)

*Sir C. (reads).* "It pains me deeply to have to reveal to you, by means of a letter, a terrible catastrophe which, I frankly admit, I had not the courage to break to you, face to face. When we were married I was, unfortunately, still under legal age. This

fact justifies my parents in taking steps to have our marriage declared null and void (*MARQUIS and MARQUISE make an indignant exclamation*); and knowing my father as I do, I cannot doubt that he will at once apply to the courts for a decree to that effect. But as the fault is mine, and not theirs, so it is I, and not they, who should bear the odium of these proceedings." So, this is the son for whom this pure and peerless woman was not good enough! This scoundrel is the creature to whose miserable pride of birth this honourable lady is to be sacrificed! These are the parents whose blue blood must not be contaminated, even in their descendants, by admixture with that of a blameless English lady! You pride yourselves upon your nobility—there is not a scavenger in England who would not consider himself degraded if he stooped to such an act of infamy! But I am an Englishman, God be thanked, and so I do not understand these things!

*Dia.* Well, sir, your son has spoken. He—my husband—in whose honour I trusted—in whose love I placed my whole faith—to whom I gave all I had in blind, unreasoning trust—he has spoken, and you have heard. You—his mother—have you no woman's heart in your bosom that you have nothing to say to this? You—his father—do you accept the position in which your son has placed you? You say nothing. Is it because this is nothing to you? Why, man, do you understand that this is ruin to me—ruin utter, absolute, and complete? This is done to save you the shame of doing it! If he did not do it, you would—do you understand that? Do you understand that I, blinded by the love of this man—deafened to all reason by the love of this man—my very brain addled by the love of this man—am about to be cruelly, foully sacrificed at the altar of his honour—his honour!—and that it is in your name that this dastard blow is to be struck?

*Marquis.* Madame, you judge hastily, and so erroneously. It pains me inexpressibly to have to admit that our unworthy son—our son no longer—has shamefully calumniated us.

*Sir C.* } What!  
*Dia.* }

*Marquis.* Sir Cuthbert Jameson, I beg you to believe that nothing was further from our intention than to take the step you have described in words which, strong as they are, are not stronger than such a course would justify. When we came here to-day the only question in our minds was whether we should receive this lady into the bosom of our family. It never entered our minds to compass the ruin of an honourable lady, whom our son has shamefully lured into a secret marriage, by



applying to have that marriage set aside. It is true that the law empowers us to do this, but that law is as infamous as he who would resort to it. It is not thus that French gentlemen are accustomed to act, Sir Cuthbert Jameson.

[SIR CUTHBERT bows.

*Marquise (kneeling at DIANA's feet).* Dear lady, my husband has spoken for himself and for me. Still, I implore you to deal gently with us, for he was my boy and I loved him, and he is dead to me, and I am sorrowing at his grave. Dear lady, you have lost a husband—I a son. In this hour of tribulation this should be a sacred bond between us—so let us comfort one another—let us comfort one another!

*Marquis.* My wife says truly, Madame. When we came here to-day the question in our minds was whether we should receive you as a daughter. That is no longer a question. I take you to my heart as one to whom, in atonement for the outrage to which you have been subjected at the hands of this unworthy man, we owe infinite reparation. I have lost a son, but I have found a daughter!

[MARQUIS embraces DIANA, who kneels sobbing at his feet.

SLOW CURTAIN.

## ACT III.

### WIDOWED.

SCENE.—*Library in the DUCHESS's villa at Monte Carlo. MR. McFIE, her secretary, discovered with CAPTAIN MUNRO, the Skipper of her yacht.*

*McFie.* Well, Captain Munro, her Grace bids me tell ye that the "Flying Eagle" is to up-anchor and get under steam for New York the day after to-morrow.

*Capt.* That's shortish notice. Let's see—we must go to Marseilles to-day to coal and ship stores, and—well, of course, it *can* be done. Same party of passengers returning in her?

*McFie.* Nay; there'll be just a varra important addection. No less a personage than the Vicomte de Bréville—the gentleman to whom her Grace is to be married on her arrival at Chicago.

*Capt.* Aye, aye! French gentleman, isn't he?

*McFie.* Aye, he's a Frenchman, pur body. He's to have

stateroom No. 3, next to Col. and Mrs. Pogson E. Bewilder. Her Grace wrote to him on her arrival, two days ago, to tell him she intended to take him back with her in her yacht, and he wires from Ventimiglia to say he'll be here this afternoon.

*Capt.* Well, that's prompt. *Young* gentleman, I believe, this time?

*McFie.* Young? Just a ridiculous raw boy! Sax-and-twenty, sir! Sax-and-twenty!

*Capt.* Well, that's only fair—eighty-four and twenty-six—average that, and it pans out fifty-five. Business man?

*McFie.* Well, not exactly, but I should say he's gifted with a varra remarkable business instinct. He's as poor as a rat, and he's secured a Duchess with £85,000 a year.

*Capt.* Well, it does him credit. Good day, Mr. *McFie*. You can tell her Grace that the yacht will be ready to weigh any time after ten on Thursday morning.

*McFie.* I'll mention it. Good day, Captain Munro. (*Exit CAPTAIN.*) Ah, it's a peety—a verra great peety! A magnificent wumman—in the prime o' life—not a day over forty—with her intellect matured, and all her physical faculties in the highest state of development, just squandering hersel' on an incomplete Frenchman of sax-and-twenty! Why, the man won't be finished for a quarter of a century yet! But a wumman's just anither name for a fule!—take 'em when ye will and where ye will and how ye will, that's a'ye can make of 'em!

*Enter DUCHESS.*

*Duch.* Mr. *McFie*, when Mr. de Bréville arrives put him in the pink room, please. 'Tain't over big, but it's only for two days, and it's the only spare room left.

*McFie.* Certainly, your Grace.

*Duch.* Now about these two swindling people—the Dudley Coxes. Is the detective here?

*McFie.* Yes, your Grace. He's sent wurd to say that he's just arrived from London with a warrant for their arrest on a charge of endeavouring to obtain a sum of £200 from his late Grace's estate on a false pretence. The detective will be here, I expect, in about ten minutes.

*Duch.* Very well. When he comes show him into the ante-room and let me know. When is Mr. Dudley Coxe to call?

*McFie.* Well, he's due now.

*Duch.* Have you got his letters?

*McFie.* Here are two which he wrote to his Grace asking him what had become of the £200 which he entrusted to his Grace

at Port Said a year ago to be employed at the tables on Mr. Coxe's behalf—

*Duch.* Ah, that's a poor shot of Coxe's! To my certain knowledge the Duke never staked a cent since '42, when he ruined himself at Chicken Hazard. Well?

*McFie.* And this is the note he addressed to your Grace yesterday, informing you that as an old and intimate friend of the late Duke he would do himself the pleasure of calling on your Grace at three to-day. Ah. (*Looking out of window.*) no doubt this is he, coming up the drive.

*Duch.* Good—show him in here. *I'll* see the man.

*McFie* (*doubtfully*). There's—there's the young wumman with him who passes as his wife.

*Duch.* Well, what of that? My sakes, I'm not squeamish! Show 'em both in, and mind, whatever you do, don't you scare 'em, *I'll* do that.

*McFie.* As your Grace pleases. [*Exit* *McFie*.]

*Duch.* (*taking up letters*). Now, Mr. Dudley Coxe, look you out for squalls. I've got a rod in pickle for you which'll just whip you into pink fits, or I'm not Euphemia S. Dundee.

[*Exit* *Duchess*.]

*Re-enter* *McFie*, followed by *Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Coxe*.

*McFie.* If ye'll just be so good as to tak' a seat, Mr. Coxe, her Grace will be with ye in a moment.

*Mr. Coxe.* I—I trust we're not intruding upon the Duchess?

*Mrs. Coxe.* If so, we can so easily call at another time.

*McFie.* Nay, by no means—her Grace fully expects ye, sir. I assure you she's just looking forward to your visit with the varra greatest interest imaginable.

*Mr. Coxe.* Really, the Duchess is most kind—*most* kind. (*Exit* *McFie*.) There, Godiva, what did I tell you? Mind you, there's no greater mistake on earth than to approach this class of people as if you were conscious of some social inferiority.

*Mrs. Coxe.* You were quite right, Dolly—your tact and knowledge of the world are simply marvellous. Only—no doubt you had some good reason for it—but wasn't it rather rash to say that we were old and intimate friends of the Duke? You know you only met him for half an hour at Port Said—for we were confined to our cabins with sea-sickness all the way to Marseilles.

*Mr. Coxe.* My dear Godiva, no man is less likely to brag of an intimacy with this class of people than I am. But we're in a serious difficulty, and it must be dealt with tactfully. Those

infernal tables have cleaned us out, and our luggage is impounded for our hotel bill. By a rare stroke of good luck this Yankee Duchess turns up in the very nick of time. Now I have to convince her that I lodged £200 with her late husband to be employed on my account. If I admitted that my acquaintance with him was a purely casual one, do you suppose that she (who knows nothing, mind you, of my singular faculty for reading off a man's character at a glance) would believe me? No. Consequently, my obvious course is to allow her to suppose that the Duke and I were intimate friends, between whom such transactions were matters of every-day occurrence.

*Mrs. Coxe.* Of course! How shrewd of you, dear!

*Mr. Coxe.* Tact, my good girl—mere tact—nothing more. Hark! I hear her coming! [*Nervously settling his tie.*]

*Mrs. Coxe (anxiously).* Is my hat straight, dear?

*Mr. Coxe.* Yes, yes—bother your hat!

*Mrs. Coxe (hurt).* Dudley!

*Enter DUCHESS.*

*Duch.* Why, Mr. Coxe, how do you do? I've heard so much about you that it's a real treat to make your acquaintance. Why, I've been looking for you these six months past!

*Mr. Coxe.* Your Grace is extremely kind. Will you permit me to present my wife—Mrs. Coxe-Coxe?

*Duch.* Mrs. Coxe-Coxe. (*Shakes hands.*) Well now, I do declare this is most kind and unceremonious. As an old friend of my husband's, Mr. Coxe (*Coxe suggests "Coxe-Coxe"*) it's a real treat to me to make your acquaintance, and I can't say how much obliged I am to you for writing to tell me you were coming. I wouldn't have missed you, Mr. Coxe (*Coxe murmurs "Coxe-Coxe"*), not for a sackful of dollars, and that's so. Are you making a long stay here?

*Mr. Coxe.* No—that is—we were thinking of leaving to-morrow—

*Mrs. Coxe (hastily).* But we may be unexpectedly detained.

*Duch.* That's not at all unlikely. One never knows one's luck. (*McFIE enters and whispers to DUCHESS.*) Oh—very good. I'll speak to him in the ante-room. May I ask you just to excuse me for one minute, Mrs. Coxe? (*Coxe murmurs "Coxe-Coxe."*) I'll be back again before you can wink.

*Mrs. Coxe.* Oh, Duchess—certainly.

[*MR. COXE opens door. Exit DUCHESS.*]

*Mr. Coxe.* It's all right, Godiva! I've done it! We're free—we shall get our money!

*Mrs. Coxe.* What a delightful woman—and how truly

humorous—"back again before we can wink." So terse and expressive! So thoroughly frank and unassuming—and such perfect mourning!

*Mr. Coxe.* Unassuming! Well, why shouldn't she be? Her father was only a pork-butcher in a high state of development. Unassuming; I like that! After all, who's better than an English lady? Not a Chicago pig-woman, whomsoever she marries!

*Mrs. Coxe.* Do you think she'll ask us down to Glenbogie? Oh, do you think she'll ask us down to Glenbogie?

*Mr. Coxe.* Why shouldn't she? She ought to consider herself deuced lucky to get us.

*Mrs. Coxe.* How wild it would make the FitzAbrahams!

*Mr. Coxe.* And the De Warrens! That snob De Warren would black a Duke's boots if he had the chance. Now the question is—how to approach the money matter. I don't exactly want to offend her, but we've only fourteen francs left.

*Mrs. Coxe.* Oh, for goodness sake don't offend her—that would never do! But with your consummate tact——

*Mr. Coxe.* Oh, I'll manage it—leave it to me!

*Enter DUCHESS.*

*Duch.* A thousand apologies—a person from London on business of some importance.

*Mr. Coxe.* If we are in the way—— [Both rise.

*Duch.* Why, you're not going? Rubbish! Sit you down again. Now I've found you I don't mean to lose sight of you in a hurry, I promise you!

*Mr. Coxe (sitting).* You are most kind, I'm sure.

*Duch.* Not in the least, I do assure you. I mean to see considerable of you before I've done, Mr. Coxe. (*Coxe murmurs "Coxe-Coxe."*) By the way, my secretary tells me that my poor old hub received some letters from you just before his death.

*Mr. Coxe (pretending not to understand).* Some letters? No—I think not.

*Mrs. Coxe.* Yes, dear—you forget—about the system.

*Mr. Coxe.* Oh, to be sure—of course—yes, I recollect! Oh, yes, I did write to the Duke—twice, I think.

*Duch.* Business letters?

*Mr. Coxe.* Well, yes—a mere nothing—hardly worth mentioning. Still, as a matter of fact, they were business letters.

*Duch.* Anything I can attend to? If so—pray don't hesitate to say so.

*Mr. Coxe.* Well, really it was such an insignificant matter that—well, it was partly this:—As you no doubt know, the poor Duke had an infallible system at roulette—given him by some Archimandrite or other on his death-bed.

*Duch.* The Duke's death-bed?

*Mr. Coxe.* No—the Archimandrite's; and when we met at Port Said I left a trifle with him—

*Duch.* With the Archimandrite?

*Mr. Coxe.* No, with the Duke—to be staked on my behalf, and my letters were merely to ask if anything had been done with it—that's all.

*Duch.* And you received no reply?

*Mr. Coxe.* Well, no—oddly enough.

*Duch.* As an old friend that must have surprised you.

*Mr. Coxe.* Well, it did, because we were always on such very good terms—and I can't tell you how delighted I was to hear that his Grace was dead, because that explained his silence so satisfactorily.

*Mrs. Coxe (aside).* Dudley's tact is wonderful!

*Duch.* He gave you some acknowledgment, I guess?

*Mr. Coxe.* Oh, no—no—we—we never took receipts from each other!

*Duch.* Just like poor Tommy! But we must be more business-like. Now it's quite clear that this sum—whatever it was—

*Mr. Coxe.* What was it, Godiva?

*Mrs. Coxe.* Two hundred pounds, dear, you said.

*Duch.* Must be due to you now, because the Duke was confined to his room with gout during the whole time of his stay here, and certainly never showed his nose inside the Casino anyhow.

*Mr. Coxe.* Indeed? Then, ha! ha! if we *are* to take a strictly prosaic view of the situation, as your Grace insists, it does look as though I had some sort of claim on his Grace's estate, though, to be perfectly frank with you, it never occurred to me to look at it in that light until you mentioned it.

*Duch.* Some sort of claim! Why, my dear Mr. Coxe (*Coxe murmurs "Coxe-Coxe"*), by your own showing it's a distinct debt, and I may as well write you a cheque at once! [*Writes.*

*Mrs. Coxe (aside).* Dudley, you're a genius!

*Mr. Coxe (aside).* Told you I'd manage it!

*Duch.* There you are. I'll take a receipt, please, because I shall have to claim against the executors.

*Mr. Coxe.* Most certainly. [*Writes.*

*Mrs. Coxe.* It's really most kind of your Grace. You can

have no idea from what a series of dreadful embarrassments you have freed us——

*Mr. Coxe (hastily).* Godiva—a postage stamp.

*Mrs. Coxe.* Certainly, Dudley—here it is.

*[Gives him a stamp, which he puts on to receipt.]*

*Mr. Coxe (aside).* For God's sake, Godiva, don't give us away! (*Aloud—giving DUCHESS the receipt*) There—with many thanks, Duchess. And now, if we *do* leave to-morrow, I hope you will allow us to do ourselves the pleasure of calling on you when you return to England.

*Mrs. Coxe.* It will be so delightful to know for certain that we shall see your Grace again.

*Duch.* Oh, you are sure to see me again. I shall be bound over, you know.

*Mr. Coxe.* Bound over?

*Duch.* To prosecute.

*Mr. Coxe.* To prosecute?

*Duch.* Yes—they'll want my evidence—at the trial.

*Mr. Coxe.* I'm afraid I'm very stupid, but may I ask—what trial?

*Duch.* Why, yours and your wife's, of course.

*Mr. Coxe.* I don't understand——

*Duch.* Great snakes, man, your trial—for obtaining £200 from me by false pretences.

*Mr. Coxe.* Duchess!

*Mrs. Coxe.* Dudley—what does she mean?

*Mr. Coxe.* I presume this is a joke.

*Duch.* Well, I don't know—you must have a keen sense of humour if you see any fun in it. You see, you were mistaken in supposing that you spoke to the Duke at Port Said, because I didn't quit him for a moment till he was snugly tucked up in his state room, which he never once left till he reached Marseilles—and as to you having entrusted money to him to stake with, why he's never so much as risked a dollar on a gamble this fifty years.

*Mr. Coxe.* But on my honour as a gentleman he told me that he had a system——

*Duch.* Well, so he had, of a sort, poor old man—but it broke up near a year ago. And it certainly wasn't a system that any one in his senses would have staked his money upon, anyhow. (*Calling at door.*) Now, Mr. Pollard, if you please.

*Enter POLLARD, a detective.*

*Mr. Coxe.* I'm absolutely at a loss to understand——

*Pollard.* Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Coxe-Coxe, I hold a warrant

for your arrest, duly backed by a Bow Street magistrate. (*Putting handcuffs on them.*) And it's my duty to caution you that any statement you may make will be used in evidence against you.

*Mr. Coxe.* But—

*Mrs. Coxe.* Oh, Dudley, Dudley, say something, unless you wish to see your wife a galley slave!

*Mr. Coxe.* This—this is most unwarrantable—most disgraceful. (*To DUCHESS.*) You shall pay for this, m'am. This is not the United States—this is a free country—at least England is—and you commit this outrage at your peril.

[*During this Mrs. COXE-COXE, who is sobbing, has been unsuccessfully endeavouring to get her handkerchief out of her handbag, but is prevented by handcuffs.*]

*Mrs. Coxe.* Dudley—(*sniff*)—my handkerchief—(*sniff*).

*Mr. Coxe.* Certainly, my love (*takes it out of her hand-bag and dabs her eyes and nose with it*).

*Enter BARKER.*

*Bar.* Your Grace wished to speak to me?

*Mr. Coxe* (*astonished*). Why, there is the very man I lent the money to!

*Mrs. Coxe.* Oh, sir, you will endorse my husband's statement—the £200 that he entrusted to you at Port Said. They've put these dreadful things upon us because he claimed the money.

*Bar.* I don't know what the lady means.

*Duch.* This person is my courier—Mr. John Barker.

*Mr. Coxe.* Courier! You a confounded courier? Why, this low-bred scoundrel allowed me to believe that he was—a—

*Duch.* Your old and intimate friend?

*Mr. Coxe.* A—yes—and took the £200. A courier, Godiva, a damned courier!

*Bar.* I don't know what you mean, sir. I have never represented that I am the Duke of Dundee, and I never saw you in my life before.

*Enter DE BRÉVILLE, as from a journey.*

*De B.* That statement is not true, Mr. Barker.

*Duch.* Armand!

*De B.* You certainly entered into conversation with Mr. Coxe at Port Said, and I happen to know that he was under the impression that he was speaking to the Duke of Dundee.



*Bar.* It's not my fault if Mr. Coxe mistook me for his Grace. The money was employed as Mr. Coxe directed. I lost it in fair play.

*Duch.* Very good—you can go, and don't come back. Take you your books to Mr. McEie—he will settle with you. Be off!

[*Exit BARKER.*]

*Mr. Coxe.* Mr. De Bréville, we are deeply indebted to you for your timely interposition. (*Both shaking hands with him.*) Excuse me—it's difficult in these things: I'm not used to them.

*De B.* No apologies, Mr. Coxe, I beg. (*To POLLARD.*) You may remove these things. (*POLLARD takes off handcuffs from both.*) Duchess, these are merely two of Nature's noblepeople who have got themselves into difficulties through an amiable desire to associate with their superiors in mere social rank. Do not let us press hardly on them. After all, it was a tribute to the charm of his Grace's society.

*Mr. Coxe.* Let me tell you, sir—

*De B.* It is an excusable ambition, Mr. Coxe, which you share with many of your amiable countrymen and women. But, my good Coxe (*Coxe shouts "Coxe-Coxe, sir!"*), permit me to give you a hint. If you are an amateur of blacking, lick the boots of as many noblemen as will permit you to do so—ah, there are plenty!—but before you begin, make quite sure that the blacking has the proper aristocratic bouquet. The blacking of a courier is not nice.

*Mr. Coxe.* Why, you infernal Frenchman—

[*Going up threateningly to DE BRÉVILLE, who turns suddenly on him.*]

*De B.* Well, sir?

*Mrs. Coxe.* Oh, do come away, Dudley! He's not a gentleman—he'll call you out!

*Mr. Coxe.* You're right. He's beneath my notice! And as for you, ma'am (*to DUCHESS*), take your cheque, ma'am! (*Handing it to her.*)

*Mrs. Coxe.* Oh, Dudley!

*Mr. Coxe.* Take your cheque! I've not the advantage of knowing what the code of etiquette may be in Chicago pork circles, but it may interest you to learn that in a civilized country no one has a right to hold his head higher than an English gentleman!

*Mrs. Coxe.* Oh, Dudley, don't be too hard upon her! You are so trenchant!

*Mr. Coxe.* Trenchant! She's brought it on herself, and it serves her right! Come away, Godiva.

[DE BRÉVILLE opens window for MR. COXE. COXE goes up to him.]

Mr. Coxe. You—you'd feel uncommonly small if you knew the profound contempt I have for you—you—

Mrs. Coxe. Oh, do come away, Dudley! (*drags him off backwards*).

[POLLARD exits into ante-room. DUCHESS looks after them for a moment, and then sits down to write.]

De B. Duchess, have you no welcome for me?

Duch. Welcome? Why, I'm just bubblin' over with it—only let me get these people off my mind first and you'll see, my dear!

De B. What people?

Duch. These poor Dudley Coxes.

De B. Ah, never concern yourself about those snobs!

Duch. Well, Coxe is a snob—there's no two ways out of that. But, Lord bless you, so am I! I've worked a bit harder and paid a bit dearer than he has to get into good society—and, after all, he was only claiming what he believed to be his own. (*Rings.*) So there's his cheque—and much good may it do him. (*Enter SERVANT.*) Take that note to the Hôtel de Paris—there's no answer. (*Exit SERVANT.*) And now, Armand—now for the welcome! It's real smart of you to turn up just in time. The yacht's laying off Nice, and we up-anchor on Friday. In a fortnight we ought to rise Sandy Hook, and in a week or so after that you'll—well, you'll be about the richest Frenchman 'tween this and Dunkirk. Why, gracious, De Bréville, what's wrong? You look as down on your luck as a damp eagle on the moult!

De B. Duchess, there is much that is wrong, and I must tell you at once that I am the wrong-doer.

Duch. Why, what on airth are you steering at?

De B. I have been guilty of a mean and miserable injustice, and I have come here to ask you, as the good and great-hearted woman I know you to be, to encourage me to repair it.

Duch. Why, yes—if dollars will do it it's as good as done. But whom, in pity's name, have you been injusting? Not a woman, De Bréville—don't say it's a woman!

De B. Alas, it is a woman!

Duch. Not a young one, De Bréville—don't say it's a young one!

De B. A young, beautiful, and blameless woman.

Duch. (*aside*). Oh, what's coming—what's coming! (*Aloud.*) Who—who is she?

De B. She is, at present, my wife.

*Duch.* Your what!!! Do you mean to tell me that when you came messing around me in Park Lane you were a married man

*De B.* Before I became of age I went through the form of marriage with a lady. I need not tell you how good and how beautiful a lady, for you knew her on board the *Africa* as Diana Caverel.

*Duch.* (*moaning*). Oh, I might have guessed it—I might have guessed it!

*De B.* As I had designedly omitted to obtain my parents' consent, that marriage is voidable, and, as matters stand, will be annulled in a fortnight's time.

*Duch.* And do you mean to tell me that you—great, big brawny tiger-shooter as you are—deserted that unhappy young critter because your Poppa and your Mumma refused their consent?

*De B.* I had not even that poor excuse, for my parents, in their righteous indignation at the outrage I had committed, took her to their hearts and disowned me.

*Duch.* Bully for them, anyhow! Well, I 'spose I've deserved this, but it comes hard and heavy for all that—vurry hard and verrry heavy! But there—I'll take it that I treated you real mean two years since, and you're payin' me back in my own coin. Tain't handsome, De Bréville, but anyhow I'm not the sort of woman to nail a bad dollar to the counter, so go you right away afore I break up, please. I'm a stupid, middle-aged woman with a thumping big British title, and a Niagara of dollars pouring, day after day, into her banking account, and you're a Frenchman with nary cent to your name, and more debts than you could reckon up 'twixt this and 'Frisco, and for all that, at present speaking, I don't rightly know how I'm going to fix myself up without you. Well, some good'll come of it anyhow, for, by—well, by the President of the United States, to put it no higher—I'll get such a sickener of Frenchmen out of this as'll set my perceptions right end up for the rest of my natural life, thanks be!

*De B.* Now, Duchess, bring your kind and generous heart into this conference, and let it decide the point at issue. It is in my mind to atone for my misdoing, as far as atonement is possible, by staying these proceedings and begging my deeply-wronged wife to take me, penniless as I am, into her heart again. Now, Duchess, I implore you to help me to do this. I know your generous nature; I know it so well that I count implicitly on your readily setting aside the injury I have worked upon you that I may be at liberty to repair the incalculably

greater injury I have inflicted upon this blameless lady. Tell me, Duchess, am I asking more than you, in the unbounded goodness of your heart, are willing to vouchsafe?

*Duch. (after a pause).* No, De Bréville, that's me, right enough; you've set out your course, plain and straight—go you and steer it. It's awful hard to say, for you've just belayed yourself about me like a t'garns'l halliard on a bitt-pin, but a good big cry and a board or two to wind'ard in a ten-knot breeze will blow a lot of that away; thanks be! Now, De Bréville, go you right away to that poor wronged critter—shake the sheepshank out of your tongue and pay out your penitence hand over hand, for you've been going as near as you can lay, and may be all a-back before you can up-helm and pay off. Make it up to her as well as you can, and—well, you've no call to stand for dollars, for what dollars can do, dollars shall. Good-bye, De Bréville. You'll excuse me, I know. You see my biler's only equal to a given pressure to the square inch, and I'll need to rake out my stoke fires afore it reaches busting point. But oh, it does come hard and heavy, De Bréville—vurry hard and vurry heavy! [*Exit in a burst of tears.*]

*De B.* When I started in life as a cynic I thought to find a ready text in every woman I met. I begin to think that if cynics are to justify their existence they must work on the surface, for when they penetrate beneath they too often find themselves face to face with their own refutation. And now, Diana—my brave and beautiful wife—how am I to approach you? In sackcloth and ashes? Ah, that masquerade is so readily assumed! Is there pardon for me in that proud heart? It may well be that there is none. Well, I must chance it—I must chance it! (*Ring heard.*) That is, perhaps, Lachaud. (*Looks at his watch.*) Yes—he is to meet me here at three.

*Enter DIANA.*

*De B.* Diana! My God, what do you do here?

*Dia.* I told your servant not to announce my name lest you should deny yourself to me. It is necessary that, at any cost, I should speak to you once again and for the last time.

*De B.* Your name was in my mind as you passed that door—nevertheless, it is needless to deny that this visit takes me greatly by surprise. Pardon me if I am unprepared for it. (*Offers her a chair, which she declines.*) How did you find me?

*Dia.* For a month past I have sought you vainly. Your parents—who have been as father and mother to me—knew nothing of your movements. I inquired at the Foreign Minister's, and was told that you had left the Service.

*De B.* That is true. Since then I have lain *perdu*—travelling in Italy to avoid my creditors, who are seeking me like bloodhounds. Once more, Diana—how did you succeed in finding me?

*Dia.* Sir Cuthbert heard that you were at Genoa, so we left Paris for Genoa two days since. There we found that you had gone to Monte Carlo, and that your address was the Villa Bonaventura. So we followed you here.

*De B.* And Sir Cuthbert Jameson—your former lover—was so good as to accompany you?

*Dia.* I am ill, and he did not think it right I should travel alone.

*De B.* Did it not occur to Sir Cuthbert Jameson that your maid would have been a sufficient escort?

*Dia.* I have no maid. I am very poor.

*De B.* That is true; I am sorry for it, and my thanks are due to Sir Cuthbert for his escort. And now, Diana, will you believe that I am greatly rejoiced to see you?

*Dia.* No, I will not. If you tell me that it is so, I will assume that you have some good reason for wishing me to believe it. In any case it matters little, for I am not here on my own behalf.

*De B.* You are not here on your own behalf—on whose, then?

*Dia.* On that of our son.

*De B.* Our son! (*Much taken aback.*)

*Dia.* A child has been born to us—a son who, if you determine to pursue the course upon which you have embarked, will go through the world a bastard. There is, I suppose, some strange magic in maternity—at all events, it has brought me a suppliant—my God! a suppliant—to *you*! Well, it may be that in fatherhood there is some mysterious magic too—a magic that may work upon your nature as my motherhood has worked upon mine. If this be so, your heart will be turned towards your child, and you will be his father as I am his mother.

*De B. (after a pause).* Diana, I am not readily moved, but what you have told me has moved me strangely. It is in your mind that I am a callous, heartless man—well, that is natural. I have justified that estimate, and six months since I should so have described myself. Nevertheless, it is not wholly true. I find—to my surprise, I admit—that it is not wholly true.

*Dia.* It is not necessary to discuss this. I am not here to reproach you, or to ask for explanations which can serve no end. I owe a duty to our son, and I am here, on his behalf, to

ask you to stay proceedings which, if they were carried to their ultimate point, would stamp him with indelible disgrace.

*De B. (after a pause).* Diana, I will gladly grant your request.

*Dia.* Ah!

*De B.* Indeed, I have already taken steps to arrest these proceedings unconditionally. You do not believe this—you have it on your tongue that this is a lie. Well, I do not blame you. It is not to be wondered at that you do not quite know me, for I do not quite know myself. I fancied that I was committing myself to an act of villainy to which I was equal: it at no time seemed easy, but at one time it seemed possible. Well, I was mistaken. I cannot do this. You ask me, for our son's sake, to give you back my name. I implore you, for that son's sake, to give me back your heart.

*Dia.* My heart—my love—to you! Great heaven, have you lost your senses? To you? Do you know in what esteem I hold you? Do you know—have you not realized—that such a woman as I—repudiated under the shelter of a cruel and calumnious lie in order that you might ally yourself with a wealthier wife—can have nothing for you but an unutterable detestation? I—the disavowed wife—the unwedded mother of your fatherless son? Oh, this is horrible—this is horrible!

*De B. (gloomily).* Is there no echo of the old love within that proud heart of yours? Is all dead, and has it left no memory?

*Dia.* It is all dead—and God be thanked that it is so! Let it rest and be forgotten for ever between us! Go—take your course, whatever it may be! If you stay these proceedings it is from your child that you must claim acknowledgment. Whatever you may do you are to me as if you had never been.

[*Going.*

*De B.* Diana—you must not go thus! Diana, in mercy—in pity—one word more!

[*Seizing her hand.*

*Dia.* Not a word—we have done with one another! Let me go—let me go, I say! Your touch horrifies me—your gaze sickens me! I hate you—hate you—hate you! (*Freeing herself.*) Go—I have done my duty—do yours, or leave me to myself for ever!

[*Exit DIANA.*

*De B.* So, Armand de Bréville, the end has laid its hand heavily upon you, and it remains for you to learn to live out your punishment. Bah! I talk like a child. What manner of man am I that I am to bow a meek head to this storm of misery? A man's life is, after all, but his bondsman—it is valuable to him so long only as it serves him well. When it turns traitor let it pay the traitor's penalty!

*Enter LACHAUD.*

*Lach. (coldly).* I received your message, and I am here. What do you want with me?

*De B.* I want to tell you that which will, I hope, re-establish me in your goodwill.

*Lach.* De Bréville, I am bound to presume that you are acting in accordance with what you believe to be your duty. I do not share your views, but as they are justified by the Code I cannot refuse to carry them forward. I bear you no ill-will.

*De B.* Thank you. You will, then, be pleased to hear that I have abandoned my intention to apply for a decree. We have still three days—you must arrest these proceedings at once.

*Lach.* Three days? Say, rather, three hours!

*De B.* What do you mean?

*Lach. (producing telegram).* I have just heard that the great case of Dupin against the Paris, Lyon, and Mediterranean was unexpectedly settled this morning. Your application will come before the Court this afternoon. My partner, Martel, will be there to represent you.

*De B.* This afternoon?

*Lach.* In all probability this afternoon.

*De B.* You must stop it by telegram. Quick, Lachaud, there is not a moment to lose.

*Lach.* Impossible. A case of such importance cannot be withdrawn at the last moment by telegram. All the affidavits are before the Court, and no earthly power can stop it now.

*De B. (significantly).* You are wrong, Lachaud—you are wrong. For instance, if I were to die——

*Lach.* Ah! if you were to die——

*De B.* The death of a plaintiff puts a stop to all personal actions.

*Lach.* No doubt, but——

[DE BRÉVILLE turns away from LACHAUD, and takes a small phial from his waistcoat pocket. LACHAUD watches him closely. As DE BRÉVILLE is about to take out the stopper, LACHAUD rushes at him, and in the struggle the phial falls, broken, to the ground.]

*De B. (furiously, during struggle).* Devil take you, let me go! Curse you! let go, I say!

*Lach.* You'll not leave this house in your present state of mind. (*Struggling with DE BRÉVILLE.*) Come come, be reasonable!

*De B.* I tell you I am resolved.

*Lach.* And so am I. Great heavens, man, do you think I am

likely to allow you to go forth with this determination in your mind?

[DE BRÉVILLE breaks from him, and makes for the door.  
At this moment a servant enters, with a card on a tray.

*Serv.* A gentleman desires to see M. le Vicomte.

*De B.* (taking card). Sir Cuthbert Jameson! Ah, I see my way! I see my way! (To *Servant*.) Admit this gentleman.  
[Exit *Servant*.

*Lach.* Who is Sir Cuthbert Jameson?

*De B.* A wealthy English baronet—a true, tried, and trusty friend. He will help me out of this. He will raise difficulties, but they will be vain, for I will compel him to render me this priceless service.

*Lach.* De Bréville, you are a veritable enigma!

*De B.* Perhaps. But the solution is at hand.

*Enter SIR CUTHBERT.*

*De B.* This is kind of you, Sir Cuthbert. You arrive very à propos. (Offers his hand.)

*Sir C.* (coldly). No—that is not necessary.

*De B.* How is this, Sir Cuthbert Jameson? By what right do you refuse my hand?

*Sir C.* I would rather not discuss that point. Is your wife here?

*De B.* (sternly). You refer to Madame la Vicomtesse de Bréville?

*Sir C.* Of course.

*De B.* Then be good enough so to style her.

*Sir C.* I asked the question merely because I have something to say to you which I do not wish to say in her hearing.

*De B.* Proceed, Sir Cuthbert Jameson.

*Sir C.* Am I to speak in the presence of this gentleman?

*De B.* This gentleman is M. Lachaud, my legal adviser. He has my fullest confidence.

*Sir C.* It has reached me that you are much pressed by creditors. I have come to say that I am ready and willing to satisfy them if that will tend to facilitate an understanding between Madame Bréville and yourself.

*De B.* Before I consent to discuss this suggestion—which I may tell you I regard as a clumsy impertinence—I must insist on your telling me why you decline to take my hand.

*Sir C.* Well, if your own conscience won't tell you, I will do so. You stated that you had reluctantly taken upon yourself to initiate these nullity proceedings, because if you did not do



so your father would—and you desired to remove from his shoulders the burden of an act to which he was compelled by your own deception. I have ascertained from M. de Bréville that this is simply untrue—and, being untrue, it removes you from the category of those with whom a man of honour can consent to associate.

*De B.* Am I to understand that you accuse me of having uttered a deliberate lie?

*Sir C.* I did not come here to quarrel with you, but if you force me to express myself in plain terms, I will, of course, do so. Yes, that is what I accuse you of.

*De B.* Lachaud, you have witnessed this interview, and you have heard the insult that Sir Cuthbert Jameson has placed upon me. Excuse me one moment.

[*DE BRÉVILLE exits, door L.*]

*Lach.* But, monsieur is, no doubt, under some deplorable misapprehension. It is, I am sure, only necessary to convince you, sir, of this, and you will at once withdraw the charge and express an honourable regret that you have made it.

*Sir C.* I am ready to receive proofs that I have done M. de Bréville an injustice, but in fairness to myself, I should tell you that his father has stated in my presence that no consideration would have induced him to take proceedings which, although sanctioned by the laws of his country, he denounced as infamous beyond expression.

[*During this speech DE BRÉVILLE has returned with a case of duelling swords.*]

*De B.* You will now understand, Lachaud, how impossible it is that this difficulty can be arranged. There is only one course—which I need not indicate to a gentleman of Sir Cuthbert's sense of honour.

*Sir C.* I don't understand you.

*De B.* That is strange; but I will be more explicit. You are an accomplished swordsman, so am I. We have often tested our skill in jest—we will now do so in earnest!

*Sir C.* This is preposterous! I leave for Paris in three-quarters of an hour.

*De B.* And I leave for Naples in an hour and a half; but in three-quarters of an hour much may be done. Will you go to Paris, or shall I go to Naples, I wonder? I wonder!

[*During this, DE BRÉVILLE has unlocked the case.*]

*Sir C.* I see that you are resolved to force a duel upon me. Well, you will find it difficult—I decline to cross swords with you.

*De B.* How, Sir Cuthbert Jameson? I thought you a brave man.

*Sir C.* You know me very well, but I am sorry to say that your opinion, one way or the other, is a matter of indifference to me.

*De B.* But it will cease to be a matter of indifference to you when I proclaim you throughout Paris as an English soldier who dared to inflict an insult on a French civilian, but who declined the consequences that a brave man would regard as inevitable.

*Sir C.* It will be time enough to declare what I shall do when you have taken that imprudent course. At present you are the husband of a lady whom I regard with profound esteem, and whose cause I am here to advocate. In that capacity you enjoy the privilege of giving your tongue full licence with impunity.

*De B.* Ah, you are here to advocate the cause of Madame la Vicomtesse de Bréville. Does it not occur to you that in thus identifying yourself with that lady without her husband's permission you are seriously compromising her good name?

*Sir C. (amazed).* What!!!

*De B. (triumphantly),* Ah, I have you now! (*With passionate insolence.*) Does it not occur to you that you—a former lover of this lady—may not have altogether forgotten the influence which she once exercised over you—if, indeed, you are not still under that influence?

*Sir C.* Damn you, hold your devilish tongue!

*De B.* Does it not occur to you that the world may regard your interest in her as anything but disinterested interest; and that in accompanying her on her travels, whether she will or no, you are doing that which may tend to affect her blameless reputation?—that it may believe, as I believe, that you are a friend neither to her nor to me, but a deadly foe to both?—that it may regard your insolent offer—which you well knew that I should reject with scorn and contempt as a transparent veil through which your insidious designs were but too clearly apparent? Does it not occur to you that a man who, under the guise of friendship, does these things, and when detected submits to that (*striking him with rapier across chest*) with patience and resignation—

*Sir C. (who has been restraining his fury with difficulty during this speech).* Curse you, you hound! Take your guard!

[*Seizing a rapier.*]

*De B. (taking the other).* Ah, I thought I should bring you to this at last!

[*They fight, SIR CUTHBERT attacking DE BRÉVILLE furiously, DE BRÉVILLE, calm and self-possessed, remaining on the defensive. Eventually, as SIR*

CUTHBERT lunges, DE BREVILLE stands bolt upright throws up both arms, and receives SIR CUTHBERT'S point in his breast. He staggers for a moment, and falls round into SIR CUTHBERT'S arms.

Sir C. My God, he has killed himself! Lachaud—witness that he threw up his guard intentionally. Lachaud—call a doctor—alarm the house! [Exit LACHAUD, hurriedly.]

De B. (as SIR CUTHBERT lays him tenderly on a cushion). Ah, Sir Cuthbert—my friend—ever my friend, and my truest friend now—of all the kindly offices you have done me, this last is the best and the kindest!

Sir C. But why, in Heaven's name, have you forced me to this?

De B. There is no time for details—enough that it became necessary that I should efface myself, and to do so, I forced this quarrel upon you. As a dying man I tell you that I am sorry and ashamed.

Enter DUCHESS, LACHAUD, Servants, Visitors, and lastly  
DIANA.

Duch. For pity's sake, Sir Cuthbert, what has happened? What does this mean?

De B. Madame, I have been most gravely wounded by Sir Cuthbert in a fair and honourable encounter which I violently forced upon him. He had no alternative; Lachaud will tell you so. Diana! (She kneels by him and supports him.) I have most grievously wronged you, and I implore you to believe my dying words that I repent from my very heart. I—entreat you to kiss me, for I die. (She kisses him.) Cuthbert—my friend—my old friend—you will forgive me for causing you this pain? Ah, it was the only way!

Sir C. My poor De Bréville! (Takes his hand.)

De B. I thank you. I am grieved to give you so much trouble, Duchess (DUCHESS is weeping), but I was much in the way of everybody—and when one is in everybody's way it behoves one to withdraw. Cuthbert—my old friend—you will take good care of Diana—I know you will take good care. (Dies.)

CURTAIN.

# THESPIS;

OR,

## THE GODS GROWN OLD.

*AN ENTIRELY ORIGINAL GROTESQUE OPERA*  
IN TWO ACTS.

WRITTEN BY W. S. GILBERT.

COMPOSED BY ARTHUR SULLIVAN.

*Produced at the Gaiety Theatre, under the management of J. Hollingshead, Tuesday, December 23rd, 1871.*

# DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

## GODS.

JUPITER	$\left. \begin{array}{l} \textit{Aged} \\ \textit{Deities} \end{array} \right\}$	...	...	...	MR. JOHN MACLEAN.
APOLLO		...	...	...	MR. F. SULLIVAN.
MARS		...	...	...	MR. WOOD.
DIANA		...	...	...	MRS. H. LEIGH.
MERCURY	...	...	...	...	MISS E. FARREN.

## THESPIANS.

THESPIS	...	...	...	...	MR. J. L. TOOLE.
SILLIMON	...	...	...	...	MR. J. G. TAYLOR.
TIMIDON	...	...	...	...	MR. MARSHALL.
TIPSCION	...	...	...	...	MR. ROBERT SOUTAR.
PREPOSTEROS	...	...	...	...	MR. H. PAYNE.
STUPIDAS	...	...	...	...	MR. F. PAYNE.
SPARKEION	...	...	...	...	MILLE. CLARY.
NICKMIS	...	...	...	...	MISS CONSTANCE LOSEBY.
PRETTEIA	...	...	...	...	MISS BEREND.
DAPHNE	...	...	...	...	MISS ANNIE TREMAINE.
CYMON	...	...	...	...	MISS L. WILSON.

## ACT I.

RUINED TEMPLE ON THE SUMMIT OF OLYMPUS.

## ACT II.

THE SAME SCÈNE, WITH THE RUINS RESTORED.

Time in Representation : One Hour and Three-quarters.

# THESPIS;

OR,

## THE GODS GROWN OLD.

### ACT I.

SCENE.—*The ruins of The Temple of the Gods on summit of Mount Olympus. Picturesque shattered columns, overgrown with ivy, etc., R. and L., with entrances to temple (ruined) R. Fallen columns on the stage. Three broken pillars 2 R. E. At the back of stage is the approach from the summit of the mountain. This should be "practicable" to enable large numbers of people to ascend and descend. In the distance are the summits of adjacent mountains. At first all this is concealed by a thick fog, which clears presently. Enter (through fog) Chorus of Stars coming off duty, as fatigued with their night's work.*

#### CHORUS OF STARS.

Throughout the night  
The constellations  
Have given light  
From various stations.  
When midnight gloom  
Falls on all nations,  
We will resume  
Our occupations.

*Solo.*

Our light, it's true,  
Is not worth mention;  
What can we do  
To gain attention,  
When, night and noon,  
With vulgar glaring,  
A great big Moon  
Is always flaring?

*Chorus.*

Throughout the night, &c.

*During Chorus Enter DIANA, an elderly Goddess. She is carefully wrapped up in Cloaks, Shawls, etc. A hood is over her head, a respirator in her mouth, and goloshes on her feet. During the chorus she takes these things off, and discovers herself dressed in the usual costume of the Lunar Diana, the Goddess of the Moon.*

*Dia. (shuddering).* Ugh! How cold the nights are! I don't know how it is, but I seem to feel the night air a great deal more than I used to. But it is time for the sun to be rising. (*Calls.*) Apollo.

*Ap. (within).* Hollo!

*Dia.* I've come off duty—it's time for you to be getting up.

*Enter APOLLO. He is an elderly "buck" with an air of assumed juvenility, and is dressed in dressing gown and smoking cap.*

*Ap. (yawning).* I shan't go out to-day. I was out yesterday and the day before and I want a little rest. I don't know how it is, but I seem to feel my work a great deal more than I used to.

*Dia.* I'm sure these short days can't hurt you. Why, you don't rise till six and you're in bed again by five: you should have a turn at *my* work and see how you like that—out all night!

*Ap.* My dear sister, I don't envy you—though I remember when I did—but that was when I was a younger sun. I don't think I'm quite well. Perhaps a little change of air will do me good. I've a great mind to show myself in London this winter, they'll be very glad to see me. No! I shan't go out to-day. I shall send them this fine, thick wholesome fog and they won't miss me. It's the best substitute for a blazing sun—and like most substitutes, nothing at all like the real thing. (*To fog.*) Be off with you.

[*Fog clears away and discovers the scene described.*]

*Hurried Music. MERCURY shoots up from behind precipice at back of stage. He carries several parcels afterwards described. He sits down, very much fatigued.*

*Mer.* Home at last! A nice time I've had of it.

*Dia.* You young scamp you've been down all night again. This is the third time you've been out this week.

*Mer.* Well you're a nice one to blow me up for that.

*Dia.* I can't help being out all night.

*Mer.* And I can't help being down all night. The nature of

Mercury requires that he should go down when the sun sets, and rise again, when the sun rises.

*Dia.* And what have you been doing?

*Mer.* Stealing on commission. There's a set of false teeth and a box of Life Pills—that's for Jupiter—An invisible peruke and a bottle of hair dye—that's for Apollo—A respirator and a pair of goloshes—that's for Cupid—A full bottomed chignon, some auriculous fluid, a box of pearl-powder, a pot of rouge, and a hare's foot—that's for Venus. •

*Dia.* Stealing! you ought to be ashamed of yourself!

*Mer.* Oh, as the god of thieves I must do something to justify my position.

*Dia.* and *Ap.* (*contemptuously*). Your position!

*Mer.* Oh I know it's nothing to boast of, even on earth. Up here, it's simply contemptible. Now that you gods are too old for your work, you've made me the miserable drudge of Olympus—groom, valet, postman, butler, commissioner, maid of all work, parish beadle, and original dustman.

*Ap.* Your Christmas boxes ought to be something considerable.

*Mer.* They ought to be but they're not. I'm treated abominably. I make everybody and I'm nobody—I go everywhere and I'm nowhere—I do everything and I'm nothing. I've made thunder for Jupiter, odes for Apollo, battles for Mars, and love for Venus. I've married couples for Hymen, and six weeks afterwards, I've divorced them for Cupid—and in return I get all the kicks while they pocket the halfpence. And in compensation for robbing me of the halfpence in question, what have they done for me?

*Ap.* Why they've—ha! ha! they've made you the god of thieves!

*Mer.* Very self-denying of them—there isn't one of them who hasn't a better claim to the distinction than I have.

SONG—MERCURY.

Oh, I'm the celestial drudge,  
From morning to night I must stop at it,  
On errands all day I must trudge,  
And I stick to my work till I drop at it!  
In summer I get up at one  
(As a good-natured donkey I'm ranked for it),  
Then I go and I light up the Sun,  
And Phœbus Apollo gets thanked for it!  
Well, well, it's the way of the world,  
And will be through all its futurity;  
Though noodles are baroned and earled,  
There's nothing for clever obscurity!



I'm the slave of the Gods, neck and heels,  
 And I'm bound to obey, though I hate at 'em;  
 And I not only order their meals,  
 But I cook 'em, and serve 'em, and wait at 'em.  
 Then I make all their nectar—I do—  
 (Which a terrible liquor to rack us is)  
 And whenever I mix them a brew,  
 Why all the thanksgivings are Bacchus's!  
 Well, well, it's the way of the world, &c.

Then reading and writing I teach,  
 And spelling books many I've edited!  
 And for bringing those arts within reach,  
 That donkey Minerva gets credited.  
 Then I scrape at the stars with a knife,  
 And plate-powder the moon (on the days for it),  
 And I hear all the world and his wife  
 Awarding Diana the praise for it!  
 Well, well, it's the way of the world, &c.

[*After song—very loud and majestic music is heard.*]

*Dia. and Mer. (looking off).* Why, who's this? Jupiter, by Jove!

*Enter JUPITER, an extremely old man, very decrepit, with very thin straggling white beard, he wears a long braided dressing-gown, handsomely trimmed, and a silk night-cap on his head. MERCURY falls back respectfully as he enters.*

*Jup.* Good day, Diana—ah Apollo—Well, well, well, what's the matter? what's the matter?

*Dia.* Why, that young scamp Mercury says that we do nothing, and leave all the duties of Olympus to him! Will you believe it, he actually says that our influence on earth is dropping down to *nil*.

*Jup.* Well, well—don't be hard on the lad—to tell you the truth, I'm not sure that he's very far wrong. Don't let it go any further, but, between ourselves, the sacrifices and votive offerings have fallen off terribly of late. Why, I can remember the time when people offered us human sacrifices—no mistake about it—human sacrifices! think of that!

*Dia.* Ah! those good old days!

*Jup.* Then it fell off to oxen, pigs, and sheep.

*Ap.* Well, there are worse things than oxen, pigs, and sheep.

*Jup.* So I've found to my cost. My dear sir—between ourselves, it's dropped off from one thing to another until it has positively dwindled down to preserved Australian beef! What do you think of that?

*Ap.* I don't like it at all.

*Jup.* You won't mention it—it might go further——

*Dia.* It couldn't fare worse.

*Jup.* In short, matters have come to such a crisis that there's no mistake about it—something must be done to restore our influence, the only question is, *What?*

QUARTETTE.

*Mer.* (coming forward in great alarm).

*Enter MARS.*

Oh incident unprecedented!

I hardly can believe it's true!

*Mars.* Why, bless the boy, he's quite demented!

Why, what's the matter, sir, with you?

*Ap.* Speak quickly, or you'll get a warning!

*Mer.* Why, mortals up the mount are swarming,

Our temple on Olympus storming,

In hundreds—aye in thousands, too!

*All.* Goodness gracious,

How audacious;

Earth is spacious,

Why come here?

Our impeding

Their proceeding

Were good breeding,

That is clear.

*Dia.* Jupiter, hear my plea;

Upon the mount if they light,

There'll be an end of me,

I won't be seen by daylight!

*Ap.* Tartarus is the place

These scoundrels you should send to—

Should they behold my face

My influence there's an end to!

*Jup.* (looking over precipice). What fools to give themselves so much exertion!

*Dia.* „ „ A government survey I'll make assertion!

*Ap.* „ „ Perhaps the Alpine club at their diversion!

*Mer.* „ „ They seem to be more like a "Cook's Excursion."

*All.* Goodness gracious, etc.

*Ap.* If, mighty Jove, you value your existence,

Send them a thunderbolt with your regards!

*Jup.* My thunderbolts, though valid at a distance,

Are not effective at a hundred yards.

*Mer.* Let the moon's rays, Diana, strike 'em flighty,

Make 'em all lunatics in various styles!

*Dia.* My Lunar rays unhappily are mighty

Only at many hundred thousand miles.

*All.* Goodness gracious, etc.

[*Exeunt JUPITER, APOLLO, DIANA, and MERCURY into ruined temple.*]

*Enter SPARKEION and NICEMIS climbing mountain at back.*

*Spark.* Here we are at last on the very summit, and we've left the others ever so far behind! Why, what's this?

*Nice.* A ruined palace! A palace on the top of a mountain. I wonder who lives here? Some mighty king, I dare say, with wealth beyond all counting, who came to live up here—

*Sp.* To avoid his creditors! It's a lovely situation for a country house, though it's very much out of repair.

*Nice.* Very inconvenient situation

*Sp.* Inconvenient?

*Nice.* Yes—how are you to get butter, milk, and eggs up here? No pigs—no poultry—no postman. Why, I should go mad.

*Sp.* What a dear little practical mind it is! What a wife you will make!

*Nice.* Don't be too sure—we are only partly married—the marriage ceremony lasts all day.

*Sp.* I've no doubt at all about it. We shall be as happy as a king and queen, though we are only a strolling actor and actress.

*Nice.* It's very kind of Thespis to celebrate our marriage day by giving the company a pic-nic on this lovely mountain.

*Sp.* And still more kind to allow us to get so much ahead of all the others. Discreet Thespis! [*Kissing her.*]

*Nice.* There now, get away, do! Remember the marriage ceremony is not yet completed.

*Sp.* But it would be ungrateful to Thespis's discretion not to take advantage of it by improving the opportunity.

*Nice.* Certainly not; get away.

*Sp.* On second thoughts the opportunity's so good it don't admit of improvement. There! [*Kisses her.*]

*Nice.* How dare you kiss me before we are quite married?

*Sp.* Attribute it to the intoxicating influence of the mountain air.

*Nice.* Then we had better go down again. It is not right to expose ourselves to influences over which we have no control.

DUET.—SPARKEION and NICEMIS.

*Sp.* Here far away from all the world,  
Dissension and derision,  
With Nature's wonders all unfurled  
To our delighted vision.

With no one here  
 (At least in sight)  
 To interfere  
 With our delight,  
 And two fond lovers sever,  
 Oh do not free,  
 Thine hand from mine,  
 I swear to thee  
 My love is thine,  
 For ever and for ever!

Nice, On mountain top the air is keen,  
 And most exhilarating,  
 And we say things we do not mean  
 In moments less elating.  
 So please to wait,  
 For thoughts that crop,  
*En tête-à-tête,*  
 On mountain top,  
 May not exactly tally  
 With those that you  
 May entertain,  
 Returning to  
 The sober plain  
 Of yon relaxing valley,

Sp. Very well—if you won't have anything to say to me, I know who will.

Nice. Who will?

Sp. Daphne will.

Nice. Daphne would flirt with anybody.

Sp. Anybody would flirt with Daphne. She is quite as pretty as you and has twice as much back-hair.

Nice. She has twice as much money, which may account for it.

Sp. At all events, *she* has appreciation. *She* likes good looks.

Nice. We all like what we haven't got.

Sp. *She* keeps her eyes open.

Nice. Yes—one of them.

Sp. Which one?

Nice. The one she doesn't wink with.

Sp. Well, I was engaged to her for six months and if she still makes eyes at me, you must attribute it to force of habit. Besides—remember—we are only half-married at present.

Nice. I suppose you mean that you are going to treat me as shamefully as you treated her. Very well, break it off if you like. I shall not offer any objection. Thespis used to be very attentive to me, and I'd just as soon be a manager's wife as a fifth-rate actor's!

*Chorus heard, at first below, then enter DAPHNE, PRETTEIA, PREPOSTEROS, STUPIDAS, TIPSEION, CYMON, and other members of THESPIS' company climbing over rocks at back. All carry small baskets.*

CHORUS—(with dance).\*

Climbing over rocky mountain,  
 Skipping rivulet and fountain,  
 Passing where the willows quiver,  
 By the ever rolling river,  
     Swollen with the summer rain.  
 Threading long and leafy mazes,  
 Dotted with unnumbered daisies,  
 Scaling rough and rugged passes,  
 Climb the hardy lads and lasses,  
     Till the mountain-top they gain.

*First Voice.*      Fill the cup and tread the measure,  
                     Make the most of fleeting leisure,  
                     Hail it as a true ally,  
                     Though it perish bye and bye!  
*Second Voice.*    Every moment brings a treasure  
                     Of its own especial pleasure,  
                     Though the moments quickly die,  
                     Greet them gaily as they fly!

*Third Voice.*    Far away from grief and care,  
                     High up in the mountain air,  
                     Let us live and reign alone,  
                     In a world that's all our own.

*Fourth Voice.*   Here enthroned in the sky,  
                     Far away from mortal eye,  
                     We'll be gods and make decrees,  
                     Those may honour them who please.

*Chorus.*            Fill the cup and tread the measure, etc.

*After CHORUS AND COUPLETS enter THESPIS climbing over rocks.*

*Thes.* Bless you, my people, bless you. Let the revels commence. After all, for thorough, unconstrained unconventional enjoyment give me a pic-nic.

*Prep. (very gloomily).* Give him a pic-nic somebody!

*Thes.* Be quiet Preposterous—don't interrupt.

*Prep.* Ha! ha! shut up again! But no matter.

[STUPIDAS endeavours, in pantomime, to reconcile him. Throughout the scene PREP. shows symptoms of breaking out into a furious passion, and STUPIDAS does all he can to pacify and restrain him.]

*Thes.* The best of a pic-nic is that everybody contributes what he pleases, and nobody knows what anybody else has

\* Afterwards transplanted to Act I. of "The Pirates of Penzance."

brought till the last moment. Now, unpack everybody, and let's see what there is for everybody.

*Nice.* I have brought you—a bottle of soda water—for the claret-cup.

*Daph.* I have brought you—a lettuce for the lobster salad.

*Sp.* A piece of ice—for the claret-cup.

*Prett.* A bottle of vinegar—for the lobster-salad.

*Cymon.* A bunch of burrage for the claret-cup!

*Tips.* A hard-boiled egg—for the lobster salad!

*Stup.* One lump of sugar for the claret-cup!

*Prep.* He has brought one lump of sugar for the claret-cup?  
Ha! ha! ha! [*Laughing melodramatically.*]

*Stup.* Well, Preposterous, and what have you brought?

*Prep.* I have brought two lumps of the very best salt for the lobster salad.

*Thes.* Oh—is that all?

*Prep.* All! Ha! Ha! He asks if it is all!

[*STUPIDAS consoles him.*]

*Thes.* But, I say—this is capital so far as it goes—nothing could be better, but it doesn't go far enough. The claret, for instance! I don't insist on claret—or a lobster—I don't insist on lobster, but a lobster salad without a lobster, why, it isn't lobster salad. Here, Tipseion!

*TIPSEION* (*a very drunken bloated fellow, dressed, however, with scrupulous accuracy and wearing a large medal round his neck*). My Master?

[*Falls on his knees to THES. and kisses his robe.*]

*Thes.* Get up—don't be a fool. Where's the claret? W arranged last week that you were to see to that?

*Tips.* True, dear master. But then I was a drunkard!

*Thes.* You were.

*Tips.* You engaged me to play convivial parts on the strength of my personal appearance.

*Thes.* I did.

*Tips.* You then found that my habits interfered with my duties as low comedian.

*Thes.* True—

*Tips.* You said yesterday that unless I took the pledge you would dismiss me from your company.

*Thes.* Quite so.

*Tips.* Good. I have taken it. It is all I have taken since yesterday. My preserver! [*Embraces him.*]

*Thes.* Yes, but where's the wine?

*Tips.* I left it behind, that I might not be tempted to violate my pledge.

*Prep.* Minion!

[Attempts to get at him, is restrained by STUPIDAS.

*Thes.* Now, Preposteros, what is the matter with you?

*Prep.* It is enough that I am down-trodden in my profession. I will not submit to imposition out of it. It is enough that as your heavy villain I get the worst of it every night in a combat of six. I will not submit to insult in the day time. I have come out, ha! ha! to enjoy myself!

*Thes.* But look here, you know—virtue only triumphs at night from seven to ten—vice gets the best of it during the other twenty-three hours. Won't that satisfy you?

[STUPIDAS endeavours to pacify him.

*Prep.* (irritated to STUP.). Ye are odious to my sight! get out of it!

*Stup.* (in great terror). What have I done?

*Thes.* Now what is it, Preposteros, what is it?

*Prep.* I a—hate him and would have his life!

*Thes.* (to STUP.). That's it—he hates you and would have your life. Now go and be merry.

*Stup.* Yes, but why does he hate me?

*Thes.* Oh—exactly. (To PREP.) Why do you hate him?

*Prep.* Because he is a minion!

*Thes.* He hates you because you are a minion. It explains itself. Now go and enjoy yourselves. Ha! ha! It is well for those who can laugh—let them do so—there is no extra charge. The light-hearted cup and the convivial jest for them—but for me—what is there for me?

*Sillimon.* There is some claret cup and lobster salad.

[Handing some.

*Thes.* (taking it). Thank you. (Resuming.) What is there for me but anxiety—ceaseless gnawing anxiety that tears at my very vitals and rends my peace of mind asunder? There is nothing whatever for me but anxiety of the nature I have just described. The charge of these thoughtless revellers is my unhappy lot. It is not a small charge, and it is rightly termed a lot, because they are many. Oh why did the gods make me a manager?

*Sill.* (as guessing a riddle). Why did the gods make him a manager?

*Sp.* Why did the gods make him a manager?

*Dap.* Why did the gods make him a manager?

*Prett.* Why did the gods make him a manager?

*Thes.* No—no—what are you talking about? what do you mean?

*Dap.* I've got it—don't tell us—

*All.* No—no—because—because——

*Thes.* (*annoyed*). It isn't a conundrum—it's a misanthropical question. Why cannot I join you? [*Retires up centre.*]

*Daph.* (*who is sitting with SPARKEION to the annoyance of NICEMIS who is crying alone*). I'm sure I don't know. We do not want you. Don't distress yourself on our account—we are getting on very comfortably—aren't we, Sparkeion?

*Spar.* We are so happy that we don't miss the lobster or the claret. What are lobster and claret compared with the society of those we love? [*Embracing DAPHNE.*]

*Daph.* Why, Nicemis, love, you are eating nothing. Aren't you happy, dear?

*Nice.* (*spitefully*). You are quite welcome to my share of everything. I intend to console myself with the society of my manager. [*Takes THIESPIS' arm affectionately.*]

*Thes.* Here I say—this won't do, you know—I can't allow it—at least before my company—besides, you are half married to Sparkeion, Sparkeion, here's your half-wife impairing my influence before my company. Don't you know the story of the gentleman who undermined his influence by associating with his inferiors?

*All.* Yes, yes,—we know it.

*Prep.* (*furiously*). I do not know it! It's ever thus! Doomed to disappointment from my earliest years——

[*STUPIDAS endeavours to console him.*]

*Thes.* There—that's enough. Preposterous—you shall hear it.

# SONG.—THIESPIS.

I once knew a chap who discharged a function  
On the North South East West Diddlesex junction,  
He was conspicuous exceeding,  
For his affable ways and his easy breeding.  
Although a Chairman of Directors,  
He was hand in glove with the ticket inspectors,  
He tipped the guards with bran-new fivers,  
And sang little songs to the engine drivers.  
Twas told to me with great compunction,  
By one who had discharged with unction,  
A Chairman of Directors function,  
On the North South East West Diddlesex junction.  
Fol diddle, lol diddle, lol lol lay.

Each Christmas Day he gave each stoker  
A silver shovel and a golden poker,  
He'd button-hole flowers for the ticket sorters,  
And rich Bath-buns for the outside porters.



He'd mount the clerks on his first-class hunters,  
And he built little villas for the road-side shunters,  
And if any were fond of pigeon shooting.  
He'd ask them down to his place at Teoting.

'Twas told to me, etc.

In course of time there spread a rumour  
That he did all this from a sense of humour,  
So instead of signalling and stoking,  
They gave themselves up to a course of joking.  
Whenever they knew that he was riding,  
They shunted his train on lonely siding,  
Or stopped all night in the middle of a tunnel,  
On the plea that the boiler was a-coming through the funnel.

'Twas told to me, etc.

If he wished to go to Perth or Stirling,  
His train through several counties whirling,  
Would set him down in a fit of larking,  
At four a.m. in the wilds of Barking.  
This pleased his whim and seemed to strike it,  
But the general Public did not like it,  
The receipts fell, after a few repeatings,  
And he got it hot at the annual meetings,

'Twas told to me, etc.

He followed out his whim with vigour,  
The shares went down to a nominal figure,  
These are the sad results proceeding  
From his affable ways and his easy breeding !  
The line, with its rails and guards and peelers,  
Was sold for a song to marine store dealers,  
The shareholders are all in the work'us,  
And he sells pipe-lights in the Regent Circus.

'Twas told to me with much compunction,

By one who had discharged with unction

A Chairman of Director's function,

On the North South East West Diddlesex junction,

Fol diddle lol diddle lol lol lay !

[After song.]

*Thes.* It's very hard. As a man I am naturally of an easy disposition. As a manager, I am compelled to hold myself aloof, that my influence may not be deteriorated. As a man, I am inclined to fraternize with the pauper—as a manager I am compelled to walk about like this : Don't know yah ! Don't know yah ! Don't know yah !

[Strides haughtily about the stage. JUPITER, MARS and APOLLO, in full Olympian costume appear on the three broken columns. *Thespians* scream.]

*Jupiter, Mars and Apollo (in recit.).* Presumptuous mortal !  
*Thes. (same business).* Don't know yah ! Don't know yah !

*Jup. Mars and Apollo (seated on three broken pillars, still in recit.).* Presumptuous mortal!

*Thes.* I do not know you, I do not know you.

*Jup., Mars and Apollo (standing on ground, recit.).* Presumptuous mortal!

*Thes. (recit.).* Remove this person.

[*STUP. and PREP. seize APOLL. and MARS.*

*Jup. (speaking).* Stop, you evidently *don't* know me. Allow me to offer you my card. [*Throws flash paper.*

*Thes.* Ah yes, it's very pretty, but we don't want any at present. When we do our Christmas piece I'll let you know. (*Changing his manner.*) Look here, you know, this is a private party and we haven't the pleasure of your acquaintance. There are a good many other mountains about, if you must have a mountain all to yourself. Don't make me let myself down before my company. (*Resuming.*) Don't know yah! Don't know yah!

*Jup.* I am Jupiter, the King of the Gods. This is Apollo. This is Mars. [*All kneel to them except THESPIA.*

*Thes.* Oh! then as I'm a respectable man, and rather particular about the company I keep, I think I'll go.

*Jup.* No—no—stop a bit. We want to consult you on a matter of great importance. There! Now we are alone. Who are you?

*Thes.* I am ThespiA of the Thessalian Theatres.

*Jup.* The very man we want. Now as a judge of what the public likes, are you impressed with my appearance as the father of the gods?

*Thes.* Well to be candid with you, I am not. In fact I'm disappointed.

*Jup.* Disappointed?

*Thes.* Yes, you see you're so much out of repair. No, you don't come up to my idea of the part. Bless you, I've played you often.

*Jup.* You have!

*Thes.* To be sure I have.

*Jup.* And how have you dressed the part?

*Thes.* Fine commanding party in the prime of life. 'Thunder-bolt—full beard—dignified manner—A good deal of this sort of thing "Don't know yah! Don't know yah! don't know yah!"

[*Imitating, crosses L.*

*Jup. (much affected).* I—I'm very much obliged to you. It's very good of you. I—I—I used to be like that. I can't tell you how much I feel it. And do you find I'm an impressive character to play?

*Thes.* Well no, I can't say you are. In fact we don't use you much out of burlesque.

*Jup.* Burlesque! [*Offended, walks up.*]

*Thes.* Yes, it's a painful subject, drop it, drop it. The fact is, you are not the gods you were—you're behind your age.

*Jup.* Well, but what are we to do? We feel that we ought to do something, but we don't know what.

*Thes.* Why don't you all go down to Earth, incog., mingle with the world, hear and see what people think of you, and judge for yourselves as to the best means to take to restore your influence?

*Jup.* Ah, but what's to become of Olympus in the meantime?

*Thes.* Lor bless you, don't distress yourself about that. I've a very good company, used to take long parts on the shortest notice. Invest us with your powers and we'll fill your places till you return.

*Jup. (aside).* The offer is tempting. But suppose you fail?

*Thes.* Fail! Oh, we never fail in our profession. We've nothing but great successes!

*Jup.* Then it's a bargain?

*Thes.* It's a bargain. [*They shake hands on it.*]

*Jup.* And that you may not be entirely without assistance, we will leave you Mercury, and whenever you find yourself in a difficulty you can consult him.

*Enter MERCURY (trump c.)*

QUARTETTE.

*Jup.* So that's arranged—you take my place, my boy,  
While we make trial of a new existence.  
At length I shall be able to enjoy  
The pleasures I have envied from a distance.

*Mer.* Compelled upon Olympus here to stop,  
While other gods go down to play the hero,  
Don't be surprised if on this mountain top  
You find your Mercury is down at zero!

*Ap.* To earth away to join in mortal acts,  
And gather fresh materials to write on,  
Investigate more closely several facts,  
That I for centuries have thrown some light on!

*Dian.* I, as the modest moon with crescent bow,  
Have always shown a light to nightly scandal,  
I must say I should like to go below,  
And find out if the game is worth the candle!

*Enter, all the Thespians, summoned by MERCURY.*

*Mer.* Here come your people!

*Thes.* People better now!

AIR.—THESPIS.

While mighty Jove goes down below  
With all the other deities,  
I fill his place and wear his "clo,"  
The very part for me it is.  
To mother earth to make a track,  
They all are spurred and booted, too,  
And you will fill, till they come back,  
The parts you best are suited to.

*Chorus.* Here's a pretty tale for future Iliads and Odysseys,  
Mortals are about to personate the gods and goddesses.  
Now to set the world in order, we will work in unity,  
Jupiter's perplexity is Thespis's opportunity.

SOLO.—SPARKEION.

Phœbus am I, with golden ray,  
The god of day, the god of day,  
When shadowy night has held her sway,  
I make the goddess fly.  
'Tis mine the task to wake the world,  
In slumber curled, in slumber curled,  
By me her charms are all unfurled,  
The god of day am I!

*Chorus.* The god of day, the god of day,  
That part shall our Sparkeion play.  
Ha! ha! &c.  
The rarest fun and rarest fare,  
That ever fell to mortal share!  
Ha! ha! &c.

SOLO.—NICEMIS

I am the moon, the lamp of night.  
I show a light—I show a light.  
With radiant sheen I put to flight  
The shadows of the sky.  
By my fair rays, as you're aware,  
Gay lovers swear—gay lovers swear,  
While greybeards sleep away their care,  
The lamp of night am I!

*Chorus.* The lamp of night—the lamp of night,  
Nicemis plays, to her delight.  
Ha! ha! ha! ha!  
The rarest fun and rarest fare,  
That ever fell to mortal share.  
Ha! ha! ha! ha!

SOLO.—TIMIDON.

Mighty old Mars, the God of War,  
I'm destined for—I'm destined for—  
A terribly famous conqueror,

With sword upon his thigh.

When armies meet with eager shout,  
And warlike rout, and warlike rout,  
You'll find me there without a doubt.

The God of War am I!

*Chorus.*

The God of War, the God of War.  
Great Timidon is destined for!

Ha! ha! ha! ha!

The rarest fun and rarest fare,  
That ever fell to mortal share.

Ha! ha! ha! ha! &c.

SOLO.—DAPHNE.

When, as the fruit of warlike deeds,  
The soldier bleeds, the soldier bleeds,  
Calliope crowns heroic deeds,

With immortality.

From mere oblivion I reclaim  
The soldier's name, the soldier's name,  
And write it on the roll of fame,

The muse of fame am I!

*Chorus.*

The muse of fame, the muse of fame,  
Calliope is Daphne's name,

Ha! ha! ha! ha!

The rarest fun and rarest fare,  
That ever fell to mortal share!

Ha! ha! ha! ha!

*Tutti.* Here's a pretty tale!

*Enter procession of old Gods, they come down very much astonished at all they see, then passing by, ascend the platform that leads to the descent at the back.*

*Gods (JUP., DIA., and APOLLO) in corner are together.*

We will go,  
Down below,  
Revels rare,  
We will share.

Ha! ha! ha!

With a gay  
Holiday,  
All unknown,  
And alone.

Ha! ha! ha!

*Tutti.*

Here's a pretty tale!

*[The Gods, including those who have lately entered in procession, group themselves on rising ground at back. The Thespians (kneeling) bid them farewell.]*

ACT II.

SCENE.—*The same scene as in Act I., with the exception that in place of the ruins that filled the foreground of the stage, the interior of a magnificent temple is seen, showing the background of the scene of Act I., through the columns of the portico at the back. High throne I.U.E. Low seats below it.*

*All the substitute gods and goddesses (that is to say, Thespians) are discovered grouped in picturesque attitudes about the stage, eating, drinking, and smoking, and singing the following verses:—*

CHORUS.

Of all symposia,  
The best by half,  
Upon Olympus, here, await us,  
We eat Ambrosia,  
And nectar quaff—  
It cheers but don't inebriate us.  
We know the fallacies  
Of human food,  
So please to pass Olympian rosy,  
We built up palaces,  
Where ruins stood,  
And find them much more snug and cosy.

SOLO—SILLIMON.

To work and think, my dear,  
Up here, would be,  
The height of conscientious folly,  
So eat and drink, my dear,  
I like to see,  
Young people gay—young people jolly.  
Olympian food, my love,  
I'll lay long odds,  
Will please your lips—those rosy portals,  
What is the good, my love  
Of being gods,  
If we must work like common mortals?

Chorus. Of all symposia, &c.

[*Exeunt all but NICEMIS, who is dressed as DIANA, and PRETTEIA, who is dressed as VENUS. They take SILLIMON'S arm and bring him down.*]

*Sillimon.* Bless their little hearts, I can refuse them nothing. As the Olympian stage-manager I ought to be strict with them and make them do their duty, but I can't. Bless their little hearts, when I see the pretty little craft come sailing up to me with a wheedling smile on their pretty little figure-heads, I can't turn my back on 'em. I'm all bow, though I'm sure I try to be stern!

*Prett.* You certainly are a dear old thing.

*Sill.* She says I'm a dear old thing! Deputy Venus says I'm a dear old thing!

*Nice.* It's her affectionate habit to describe everybody in those terms. I am more particular, but still even I am bound to admit that you are certainly a very dear old thing.

*Sill.* Deputy Venus says I'm a dear old thing, and deputy Diana, who is much more particular, endorses it! Who could be severe with such deputy divinities?

*Prett.* Do you know, I'm going to ask you a favour.

*Sill.* Venus is going to ask me a favour!

*Prett.* You see, I am Venus.

*Sill.* No one who saw your face would doubt it.

*Nice.* (*astute*). No one who knew her *character* would.

*Prett.* Well Venus, you know, is married to Mars.

*Sill.* To Vulcan, my dear, to Vulcan. The exact connubial relation of the different gods and goddesses is a point on which we must be extremely particular.

*Prett.* I beg your pardon—Venus is married to Mars.

*Nice.* If she isn't married to Mars, she ought to be.

*Sill.* Then that decides it—call it married to Mars.

*Prett.* Married to Vulcan or married to Mars, what does it signify?

*Sill.* My dear, it's a matter on which I have no personal feeling whatever.

*Prett.* So that she is married to some one!

*Sill.* Exactly! so that she is married to some one. Call it married to Mars.

*Prett.* Now here's my difficulty. Presumptios takes the place of Mars, and Presumptios is my father!

*Sill.* Then why object to Vulcan?

*Prett.* Because Vulcan is my grandfather!

*Sill.* But, my dear, what an objection! You are playing a part till the real gods return. That's all! Whether you are supposed to be married to your father—or your grandfather, what does it matter? This passion for realism is the curse of the stage!

*Prett.* That's all very well, but I can't throw myself into a

part that has already lasted a' twelvemonth, when I have to make love to my father. It interferes with my conception of the characters. It spoils the part.

*Sill.* Well, I'll see what can be done. (*Exit PRETTEIA L.U.E.*) That's always the way with beginners, they've no imaginative power. A true artist ought to be superior to such considerations. (*NICEMIS comes down R.*) Well, Nicemis—I should say Diana—what's wrong with you? Don't you like your part?

*Nice.* Oh, immensely! It's great fun.

*Sill.* Don't you find it lonely out by yourself all night?

*Nice.* Oh, but I'm not alone all night!

*Sill.* But—I don't want to ask any injudicious questions—but who accompanies you?

*Nice.* Who? why Sparkeion, of course.

*Sill.* Sparkeion? Well, but Sparkeion is Phœbus Apollo. (*Enter SPARKEION*) He's the Sun, you know.

*Nice.* Of course he is; I should catch my death of cold, in the night air, if he didn't accompany me.

*Sp.* My dear Sillimon, it would never do for a young lady to be out alone all night. It wouldn't be respectable.

*Sill.* There's a good deal of truth in that. But still—the Sun—at night—I don't like the idea. The original Diana always went out alone.

*Nice.* I hope the original Diana is no rule for me. After all, what does it matter?

*Sill.* To be sure—what does it matter?

*Sp.* The sun at night, or in the daytime!

*Sill.* So that he shines. That's all that's necessary. (*Exit NICEMIS R.U.E.*) But poor Daphne, what will she say to this?

*Sp.* Oh, Daphne can console herself; young ladies soon get over this sort of thing. Did you never hear of the young lady who was engaged to Cousin Robin?

*Sill.* Never.

*Sp.* Then I'll sing it to you.

SONG—SPARKEION.

Little maid of Arcadee  
Sat on Cousin Robin's knee,  
Thought in form and face and limb,  
Nobody could rival him.  
He was brave and she was fair.  
Truth, they made a pretty pair.  
Happy little maiden, she—  
Happy maid of Arcadee!



Moments fled as moments will  
 Happily enough, until,  
 After, say, a month or two,  
 Robin did as Robins do.  
 Weary of his lover's play,  
 Jilted her and went away.  
 Wretched little maiden, she—  
 Wretched maid of Arcadée!  
 To her little home she crept,  
 There she sat her down and wept,  
 Maiden wept as maidens will—  
 Grew so thin and pale—until  
 Cousin Richard came to woo!  
 Then again the roses grew!  
 Happy little maiden, she—  
 Happy maid of Arcadée!

[*Exit SPARKEION.*]

*Sill.* Well, Mercury, my boy, you've had a year's experience of us here. How do we do it? I think we're rather an improvement on the original gods—don't you?

*Mer.* Well, you see, there's a good deal to be said on both sides of the question; you are certainly younger than the original gods, and, therefore, more active. On the other hand, they are certainly older than you, and have, therefore, more experience. On the whole I prefer *you*, because your mistakes amuse me.

SONG.—MERCURY.

Olympus is now in a terrible muddle,  
 The deputy deities all are at fault;  
 They splutter and splash like a pig in a puddle,  
 And dickens a one of 'em's earning his salt.  
 For Thespis as Jove is a terrible blunder,  
 Too nervous and timid—too easy and weak—  
 Whenever he's called on to lighten or thunder,  
 The thought of it keeps him awake for a week!  
 Then mighty Mars hasn't the pluck of a parrot,  
 When left in the dark he will quiver and quail;  
 And Vulcan has arms that would snap like a carrot,  
 Before he could drive in a tenpenny nail!  
 Then Venus's freckles are very repelling.  
 And Venus should *not* have a squint in her eyes;  
 The learned Minerva is weak in her spelling,  
 And scatters her h's all over the skies.  
 Then Pluto, in kindhearted tenderness erring,  
 Can't make up his mind to let anyone die—  
 The *Times* has a paragraph ever recurring,  
 "Remarkable instance of longevity."  
 On some it has come as a serious onus,  
 To others it's quite an advantage—in short,  
 While ev'ry Life Office declares a big bonus,  
 The poor undertakers are all in the court!

Then Cupid, the rascal, forgetting his trade is  
 To make men and women impartially smart,  
 Will only shoot at pretty young ladies,  
 And never takes aim at a bachelor's heart.  
 The results of this freak—or whatever you term it—  
 Should cover the wicked young scamp with disgrace,  
 While ev'ry young man is as shy as a hermit,  
 Young ladies are popping all over the place!  
 This wouldn't much matter—for bashful and shy men,  
 When skilfully handled, are certain to fall,  
 But, alas! that determined young bachelor Hymen  
 Refuses to wed anybody at all!  
 He swears that Love's flame is the vilest of arson's,  
 And looks upon marriage as quite a mistake;  
 Now, what in the world's to become of the parsons,  
 And what of the artist who sugars the cake?  
 In short, you will see from the facts that I'm showing,  
 The state of the case is exceedingly sad;  
 If Thespis's people go on as they're going,  
 Olympus will certainly go to the bad!  
 From Jupiter downwards there isn't a dab in it,  
 All of 'em quibble and shuffle and shirk;  
 A premier in Downing Street, forming a Cabinet,  
 Couldn't find people less fit for their work!

*Enter THESPIA, L.U.E.*

*Thes.* Sillimon, you can retire.

*Sill.* Sir, I—

*Thes.* Don't pretend you can't when I say you can. I've seen you do it—go! (*Exit SILLIMON bowing extravagantly, THESPIA imitates him.*) Well, Mercury, I've been in power one year to-day.

*Mer.* One year to-day. How do you like ruling the world?

*Thes.* Like it! Why it's as straightforward as possible. Why there hasn't been a hitch of any kind since we came up here. Lor! The airs you gods and goddesses give yourselves are perfectly sickening. Why it's mere child's play!

*Mer.* Very simple, isn't it?

*Thes.* Simple? Why I could do it on my head?

*Mer.* Ah—I daresay you will do it on your head very soon.

*Thes.* What do you mean by *that*, Mercury?

*Mer.* I mean that when you've turned the world quite topsy-turvy you won't know whether you're standing on your head or your heels.

*Thes.* Well, but, Mercury, it's all right at present.

*Mer.* Oh yes—as far as we know. .

*Thes.* Well, but, you know, we know as much as anybody knows; you know, I believe, that the world's still going on.

*Mer.* Yes—as far as we can judge—much as usual.

*Thes.* Well, then, give the Father of the Drama his due, Mercury. Don't be envious of the father of the Drama.

*Thes.* Well, but you see you leave so much to accident.

*Mer.* Well, Mercury, if I do, it's my principle. I am an easy man, and I like to make things as pleasant as possible. What did I do the day we took office? Why I called the company together and I said to them: "Here we are, you know, gods and goddesses, no mistake about it, the real thing. Well, we have certain duties to discharge, let's discharge them intelligently. Don't let us be hampered by routine and red tape and precedent, let's set the original gods an example, and put a liberal interpretation on our duties. If it occurs to any one to try an experiment in his own department, let him try it, if he fails there's no harm done, if he succeeds it is a distinct gain to society. 'Take it easy,' I said, "and at the same time, make experiments. Don't hurry your work, do it slowly, and do it well." And here we are after a twelvemonth, and not a single complaint or a single petition has reached me.

*Mer.* No—not yet.

*Thes.* What do you mean by "no, not yet"?

*Mer.* Well, you see, you don't understand these things. All the petitions that are addressed by men to Jupiter pass through my hands, and it's my duty to collect them and present them once a year.

*Thes.* Oh, only once a year?

*Mer.* Only once a year.

*Thes.* And the year is up—?

*Mer.* To-day.

*Thes.* Oh, then I suppose there are *some* complaints?

*Mer.* Yes, there are *some*.

*Thes.* (*disturbed*). Oh. Perhaps there are a good many?

*Mer.* There are a good many.

*Thes.* Oh. Perhaps there are a thundering lot?

*Mer.* There are a thundering lot.

*Thes.* (*very much disturbed*). Oh!

*Mer.* You see you've been taking it so very easy—and so have most of your company.

*Thes.* Oh, who has been taking it easy?

*Mer.* Well, all except those who have been trying experiments.

*Thes.* Well but I suppose the experiments are ingenious?

*Mer.* Yes; they are ingenious, but on the whole ill-judged. But it's time to go and summon your court.

*Thes.* What for?

*Mer.* To hear the complaints. In five minutes they will be here. [Exit.

*Thes.* (*very uneasy*). I don't know how it is, but there is something in that young man's manner that suggests that the Father of the Gods has been taking it *too* easy. Perhaps it would have been better if I hadn't given my company so much scope. I wonder what they've been doing. I think I will curtail their discretion, though none of them appear to have much of the article. It seems a pity to deprive 'em of what little they have.

*Enter DAPHNE, weeping.*

*Thes.* Now then, Daphne, what's the matter with you?

*Daphne.* Well, you know how disgracefully Sparkeion——

*Thes.* (*correcting her*). Apollo——

*Daphne.* Apollo, then—has treated me. He promised to marry me years ago, and now he's married to Nicemis.

*Thes.* Now look here. I can't go into that. You're in Olympus now and must behave accordingly. Drop your Daphne—assume your Calliope.

*Dap.* Quite so. That's it!

[*Mysteriously.*

*Thes.* Oh—that is it?

[*Puzzled.*

*Dap.* That is it, Thespis. I am Calliope, the Muse of Fame. Very good. This morning I was in the Olympian library, and I took down the only book there. Here it is.

*Thes.* (*taking it*). Lemprière's Classical Dictionary. The Olympian Peerage.

*Dap.* Open it at Apollo.

*Thes.* (*opens it*). It is done.

*Dap.* Read.

*Thes.* "Apollo was several times married, among others to Issa, Bolina, Coronis, Chymenc, Cyrene, Chione, Acacallis, and Calliope."

*Dap.* And Calliope.

*Thes.* (*musing*). Ha! I didn't know he was married to them.

*Dap.* (*severely*). Sir! This is the Family Edition.

*Thes.* Quite so.

*Dap.* You couldn't expect a lady to read any other?

*Thes.* On no consideration. But in the original version——

*Dap.* I go by the Family Edition.

*Thes.* Then by the Family Edition, Apollo is your husband.

*Enter NICEMIS and SPARKEION.*

*Nice.* Apollo your husband? He is my husband.

*Dap.* I beg your pardon. He is *my* husband.

*Nice.* Apollo is Sparkeion, and he's married to me.

*Dap.* Sparkeion is Apollo, and he's married to me.

*Nice.* He's my husband.

*Dap.* He's your brother.

*Thes.* Look here, Apollo, whose husband are you? Don't let's have any row about it; whose husband are you?

*Sp.* Upon my honour I don't know. I'm in a very delicate position, but I'll fall in with any arrangement Thespias may propose.

*Dap.* I've just found out that he's my husband, and yet he goes out every evening with that "thing"!

*Thes.* Perhaps he's trying an experiment.

*Dap.* I don't like my husband to make such experiments. The question is, who are we all and what is our relation to each other.

QUARTETTE.

*Sp.* You're Diana, I'm Apollo—  
And Calliope is she.

*Dap.* He's your brother.

*Nice.* You're another.

He has fairly married me,  
*Dap.* By the rules of this fair spot

I'm his wife, and you are not—  
*Sp. and Dap.* By the rules of this fair spot,

I'm } his wife, and you are not.  
She's }

*Nice.* By this golden wedding ring,  
I'm his wife, and you're a "thing."

*Dap., Nice, and Sp.* By this golden wedding ring,  
I'm } his wife, and you're a "thing."  
She's }

*All.* Please will some one kindly tell us,  
Who are our respective kin?

All of { <sup>us</sup> } are very jealous,  
          { <sup>them</sup> }

Neither of { <sup>us</sup> } will give in.  
          { <sup>them</sup> }

*Nice.* He's my husband I declare,  
I espoused him properlee.

*Sp.* That is true, for I was there,  
And I saw her marry me.

*Dap.* He's your brother—I'm his wife,  
If we go by Lemprière,

*Sp.* So she is, upon my life,  
Really that seems very fair.

*Nice,* You're my husband and no other.

*Sp.* • That is true enough I swear,  
*Daph.* I'm his wife, and your his brother,  
*Sp.* If we go by Lemprière.  
*Nicc* It will surely be unfair,  
 To decide by Lemprière. (*crying*)  
*Daph.* I will surely be quite fair,  
 To decide by Lemprière,  
*Sp. and Thes.* How you settle I don't care,  
 Leave it all to Lemprière.  
 (*spoken*) The Verdict.,  
 As Sparkeion is Apollo  
 Up in this Olympian clime,  
 Why, Nicemis, it will follow,  
 He's *her* husband, for the time—  
 (*indicating DAPHNE*)  
 When Sparkeion turns to mortal,  
 Join once more the sons of men,  
 He may take *you* to his portal  
 (*indicating NICEMIS*)  
 He will be *your* husband then.  
 That oh that is my decision,  
 'Cording to my mental vision.  
 Put an end to all collision,  
 That oh that is my decision.  
 My decision—my decision,  
*All.* That oh that is his decision,  
 His decision—his decision! &c.  
*Exeunt THES., NICK., SPARK., and DAPHNE, SPARK with*  
*DAPHNE, NICEMIS weeping with THESPIA).*

*Mysterious Music. Enter JUPITER, APOLLO, and MARS, from below, at the back of stage. All wear cloaks as disguise and all are masked.*

RECIT.

Oh rage and fury! Oh shame and sorrow!  
 We'll be resuming our ranks to-morrow,  
 Since from Olympus we have departed,  
 We've been distracted and brokenhearted,  
 Oh wicked Thespi! Oh villain scurvy;  
 Through him Olympus is topsy turvy!  
 Compelled to silence to grin and bear it!  
 He's caused our sorrow, and he shall share it.  
 Where is the monster! Avenge his blunders,  
 He has awakened Olympian thunders.

*Enter MERCURY.*

*Jup. (recit.)* Oh Monster!

*Ap. (recit.)* Oh Monster!

*Mars (recit.)* Oh Monster!

*Mer. (in great terror),* Please sir, what have I done sir?

*Jup.* What did we leave you behind for?

*Mer.* Please sir that's the question I asked for when you went away.

*Jup.* Was it not that Thespis might consult you whenever he was in a difficulty?

*Mer.* Well, here I've been, ready to be consulted, chockful of reliable information—running over with celestial maxims—advice gratis ten to four—after twelve ring the night bell in cases of emergency.

*Jup.* And hasn't he consulted you?

*Mer.* Not he—he disagrees with me about everything.

*Jup.* He must have misunderstood me. I told him to consult you whenever he was in a fix.

*Mer.* He must have thought you said *insult*. Why whenever I opened my mouth he jumps down my throat. It isn't pleasant to have a fellow constantly jumping down your throat—especially when he always disagrees with you. It's just the sort of thing I can't digest.

*Jup.* (*in a rage*). Send him here I'll talk to him.

*Enter THESPIA. He is much terrified.*

*Jup.* (*recit.*). Oh Monster!

*Ap.* (*recit.*). Oh Monster!

*Mars* (*recit.*). Oh Monster!

*THESPIA sings in great terror, which he endeavours to conceal.*

*Jup.* Well Sir, the year is up to-day.

*Ap.* And a nice mess you've made of it.

*Mars.* You've deranged the whole scheme of society.

*Thes.* (*aside.*) There's going to be a row! (*Aloud and very familiarly.*) My dear boy—I do assure you—

*Jup.* (*in recit.*). Be respectful!

*Ap.* (*in recit.*). Be respectful!

*Mars* (*in recit.*). Be respectful!

*Thes.* I don't know what you allude to. With the exception of getting our scene-painter to "run up" this temple, because we found the ruins draughty, we haven't touched a thing.

*Jup.* (*in recit.*). Oh story teller!

*Ap.* (*in recit.*). Oh story teller!

*Mars* (*in recit.*). Oh story teller!

*Enter THESPIANS.*

*Thes.* My dear fellows, you're distressing yourselves unnecessarily. The court of Olympus is about to assemble to listen to the complaints of the year, if any. But there are none, or next to none. Let the Olympians assemble!

Enter THESPIANS.

[THESPIA takes chair. JUP., AP. and MARS sit below him.  
*Thes.* Ladies and gentlemen. It seems that it is usual for the gods to assemble once a year to listen to mortal petitions. It doesn't seem to me to be a good plan, as work is liable to accumulate; but as I'm particularly anxious not to interfere with Olympian precedent, but to allow everything to go on as it has always been accustomed to go—why, we'll say no more about it. (*Aside.*) But how shall I account for your presence?

*Jup.* Say we are gentlemen of the press.

*Thes.* That all our proceedings may be perfectly open and above-board I have communicated with the most influential members of the Athenian press, and I beg to introduce to your notice three of its most distinguished members. They bear marks emblematic of the anonymous character of modern journalism. (*Business of introduction.* THESPIA very uneasy.) Now then, if you're all ready we will begin.

*Mer.* (*brings tremendous bundles of petitions*). Here is the agenda.

*Thes.* What's that. The petitions?

*Mer.* Some of them. (*Opens one and reads.*) Ah, I thought there'd be a row about it.

*Thes.* Why, what's wrong now?

*Mer.* Why, it's been a foggy Friday in November for the last six months and the Athenians are tired of it.

*Thes.* There's no pleasing some people. This craving for perpetual change is the curse of the country. Friday's a very nice day.

*Mer.* So it is, but a Friday six months long!—it gets monotonous.

*Jup., Ap. and Mars* (*in recit. rising.*) It's perfectly ridiculous.

*Thes.* (*calling them*). It shall be arranged. Cymon!

*Cymon* (*as Time with the usual attributes*). Sir!

*Thes.* (*introducing him to Three Gods*). Allow me—Father Time—rather young at present but even Time must have a beginning. In course of Time, Time will grow older. Now then, Father Time, what's this about a wet Friday in November for the last six months?

*Cym.* Well, the fact is, I've been trying an experiment. Seven days in the week is an awkward number. It can't be halved. Two's into seven won't go.

*Thes.* (*tries it on his fingers*). Quite so—quite so.

*Cym.* So I abolished Saturday.



*Jup., Ap. and Mars.* Oh but——

[*Rising.*

*Thes.* Do be quiet. He's a very intelligent young man and knows what he is about. So you abolished Saturday. And how did you find it answer?

*Cym.* Admirably.

*Thes.* You hear? He found it answer admirably.

*Cym.* Yes, only Sunday refused to take its place.

*Thes.* Sunday refused to take its place?

*Cym.* Sunday comes after Saturday—Sunday won't go on duty after Friday, Sunday's principles are very strict. That's where my experiment sticks.

*Thes.* Well, but why November? come, why November?

*Cym.* December can't begin till November has finished. November can't finish because he's abolished Saturday. There again my experiment sticks.

*Thes.* Well, but why wet? Come now, why wet?

*Cym.* Ah, that is your fault. You turned on the rain six months ago, and you forgot to turn it off again.

*Jup., Mars and Ap.* (*rising—recitative.*) Oh this is monstrous!

*All.* Order, order.

*Thes.* Gentlemen, pray be seated. (*To the others.*) The liberty of the press, one can't help it. (*To the three gods.*) It is easily settled. Athens has had a wet Friday in November for the last six months. Let them have a blazing Tuesday in July for the next twelve.

*Jup., Mars and Ap.* But——

*All.* Order, order.

*Thes.* Now then, the next article.

*Mer.* Here's a petition from the Peace Society. They complain that there are no more battles.

*Mars* (*springing up*). What!

*Thes.* Quiet there! Good dog—soho; Timidon!

*Tim* (*as MARS*). Here.

*Thes.* What's this about there being no battles?

*Tim.* I've abolished battles; it's an experiment.

*Mars* (*springing up*). Oh come, I say——

*Thes.* Quiet then! (*To TIM.*) Abolished battles?

*Tim.* Yes, you told us on taking office to remember two things, to try experiments and to take it easy. I found I couldn't take it easy while there are any battles to attend to, so I tried the experiment and abolished battles. And then I took it easy. The Peace Society ought to be very much obliged to me.

*Thes.* Obligated to you! Why, confound it! since battles have been abolished war is universal.

*Tim.* War universal?

*Thes.* To be sure it is! Now that nations can't fight, no two of 'em are on speaking terms. The dread of fighting was the only thing that kept them civil to each other. Let battles be restored and peace reign supreme.

*Mer.* (*reads*). Here's a petition from the associated wine merchants of Mytilene.

*Thes.* Well, what's wrong with the associated wine merchants of Mytilene? Are there no grapes this year?

*Mer.* Plenty of grapes; more than usual.

*Thes.* (*to the gods*). You observe, there is no deception; there are more than usual.

*Mer.* There are plenty of grapes, only they are full of ginger beer.

*Three Gods.* Oh, come I say.

[*Rising, they are put down by THESPIA.*]

*Thes.* Eh? what. (*Much alarmed.*) Bacchus?

*Tips.* (*as BACCHUS*). Here!

*Thes.* There seems to be something unusual with the grapes of Mytilene; they only grow ginger beer.

*Tips.* And a very good thing too.

*Thes.* It's very nice in it's way, but it is not what one looks for from grapes.

*Tips.* Beloved master, a week before we came up here, you insisted on my taking the pledge. By so doing you rescued me from my otherwise inevitable misery. I cannot express my thanks. Embrace me!

[*Attempts to embrace him.*]

*Thes.* Get out, don't be a fool. Look here, you know you're the god of wine.

*Tips.* I am.

*Thes.* (*very angry.*) Well, do you consider it consistent with your duty as the god of wine to make the grapes yield nothing but ginger beer?

*Tips.* Do you consider it consistent with my duty as a total abstainer, to grow anything stronger than ginger beer?

*Thes.* But your duty as the god of wine—

*Tips.* In every respect in which my duty as the god of wine can be discharged consistently with my duty as a total abstainer, I will discharge it. But when the functions clash, everything must give way to the pledge. My preserver!

[*Attempts to embrace him.*]

*Thes.* Don't be a confounded fool! This can be arranged. We can't give over the wine this year, but at least we can improve the ginger beer. Let all the ginger beer be extracted from it immediately.

*Jup., Mars., Ap. (aside).* We can't stand this,  
 We can't stand this,  
 It's much too strong,  
 We can't stand this.  
 It would be wrong,  
 Extremely wrong,  
 If we stood this,  
 If we stand this,  
 If we stand this,  
 We can't stand this.

*Dap., Spark., Nice.* Great Jove, this interference,  
 Is more than we can stand;  
 Of them make a clearance,  
 With your majestic hand.

*Joe.* This cool audacity, it beats us hollow  
*(removing mask)* I'm Jupiter!

*Mars.* I'm Mars!

*Ap.* I'm Apollo

*Enter DIANA and all the other gods and goddesses.*

*All. (kneeling with their foreheads on the ground).*

Jupiter, Mars and Apollo,  
 Have quitted the dwellings of men;  
 The other gods quickly will follow,  
 And what will become of us then.  
 Oh, pardon us, Jove and Apollo,  
 Pardon us, Jupiter, Mars;  
 Oh, see us in misery wallow,  
 Cursing our terrible stars.

*Enter other gods.*

CHORUS AND BALLET.

*All the Thespians.* Let us remain, we beg of you pleadingly!  
*Three Gods.* Let them remain, they beg of us pleadingly!  
*Thes.* Life on Olympus suits us exceedingly.  
*Gods.* Life on Olympus suits them exceedingly.  
*Thes.* Let us remain, we pray in humility!  
*Gods.* Let 'em remain, they pray in humility.  
*Thes.* If we have shown some little ability.  
*Gods.* If they have shown some little ability.  
 Let us remain, etc.

*Jupiter.* Enough, your reign is ended;

Upon this sacred hill

Let him be apprehended,  
 And learn our awful will.

Away to earth, contemptible comedians,  
 And hear our curse, before we set you free;  
 You shall all be eminent tragedians,  
 Whom no one ever goes to see!

*All.* We go to earth, contemptible comedians,  
 We hear his curse before he sets us free,  
 We shall all be eminent tragedians,  
 Whom no one ever goes to see!

Sil. Whom no one—  
 Sp. Whom no one—  
 Thes. Whom no one—  
 All. Ever, ever goes to see.

[*The Thespians are driven away by the gods, who group themselves in attitudes of triumph.*]

Thes. Now, here you see the arrant folly  
 Of doing your best to make things jolly.  
 I've ruled the world like a chap in his senses,  
 Observe the terrible consequences.  
 Great Jupiter, whom nothing pleases,  
 Splutters and swears, and kicks up breezes,  
 And sends us home in a mood avengin',  
 In double quick time, like a railroad engine.  
 And this he does without compunction,  
 Because I have discharged with unction  
 A highly complicated function,  
 Complying with his own injunction.  
 Fol, lol, lay.

Chorus. All this he does, etc.

[*The gods drive the Thespians away. The Thespians prepare to descend the mountain as the curtain falls.*]













